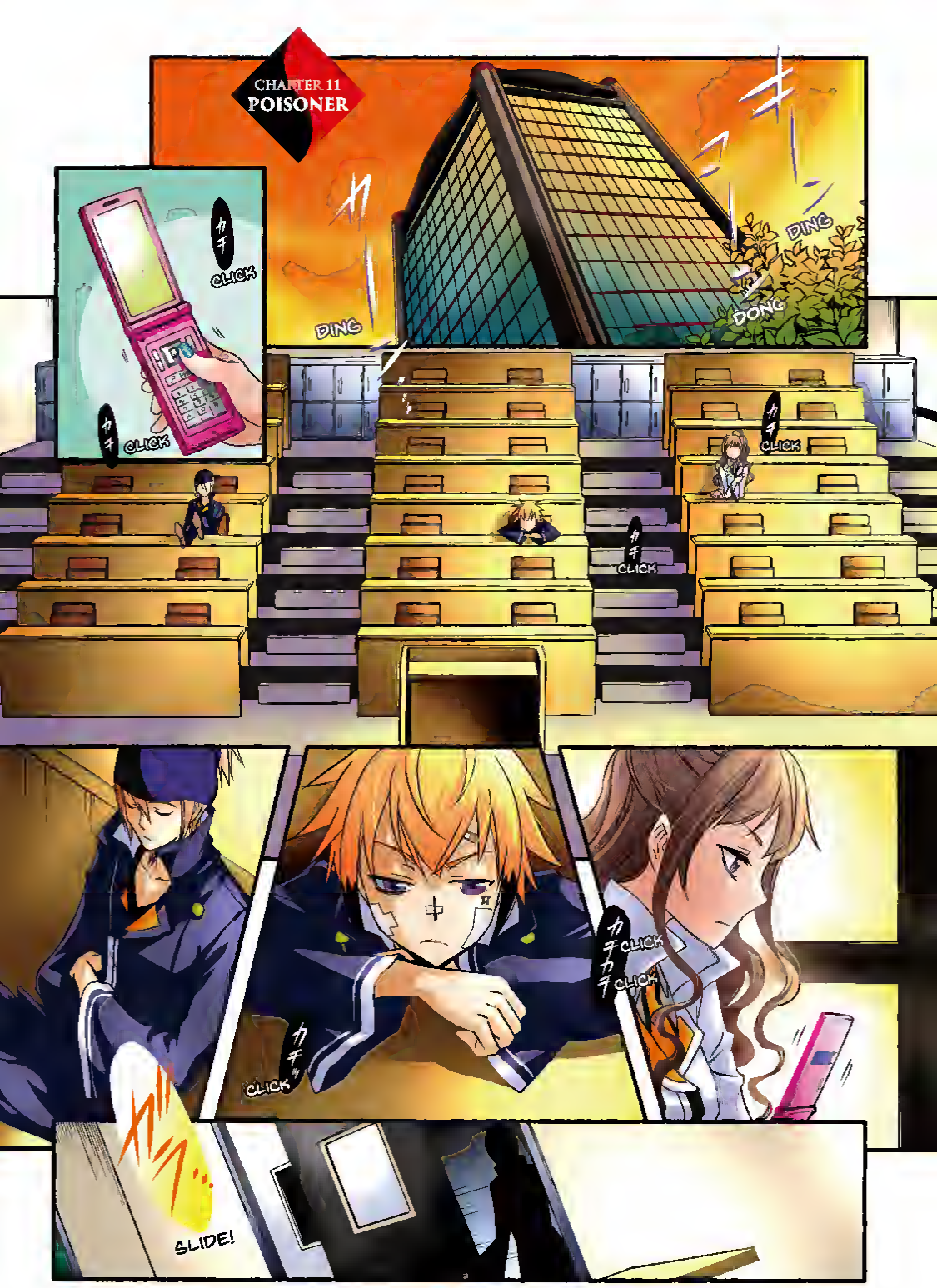
TOKYO
RAVENS
3
STORY BY
KOUHEI AZANO
ART BY
ATSUSHI SUZUMI
CHARACTER DESIGN BY
SUMIHEI


CHAPTER 11
POISONER
カチ
CLICK
カチ
CLICK
DING
DING
DONG
カチ
CLICK
カチ
CLICK
カチ
CLICK
カチカチ
CLICK
CLICK
カチ
CLICK
SLIDE!

CHAPTER 11
POISONER
TOKYO RAVENS
STORY: KOUHEI AZANO ART: ATSUSHI SUZUMI CHARACTER DESIGN: SUMIHEI

CHAPTER 11
POISONER

TOKYO RAVENS

STORY: KOUHEI AZANO ART: ATSUSHI SUZUMI CHARACTER DESIGN: SUMIHEI

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STARTLE
SHUDDER
HUH?
GLARE
UH...
GLARE
GLARE
W-WHAT'RE YOU GUYS DOING HERE AFTER SCHOOL?
DOES THAT MEAN...?
GLANCE
?
?
...OH. IT'S JUST TENMA.
SIGH

ARE THE...
CLICK
CLICK
...THREE OF YOU...?
SILENCE
WELL, REGARD-LESS, THIS IS PERFECT.
I JUST CAME FROM SEEING MR. OTOMO.
OH... IS THAT SO?
PFET
NO, WE'RE NOT.
KA-CHING
HE TOLD ME TO...
...GIVE THIS TO YOU, HARU-TORA.

Hey, wait a SEC
IS THAT LOUSY EXCUSE FOR A TEACHER PLANNING ON FORCING ME INTO ANOTHER FAMILIAR BATTLE?
I WONDER IF THIS IS HIS UNIQUE WAY OF GETTING REVENGE ON YOU.
TO GIVE IT TO ME?
WHAT IS THIS THING?
IT'S A MONK'S STAFF.
DIDN'T YOU BREAK THAT WOODEN SWORD YESTERDAY?
HE SAID TO USE THIS IN ITS PLACE.
HM? WHAT A PAIN...
... what is this thing?
I don't get it...
Kik-Chink-Chink
How stupid can he--?!
HE WAS PRETTY UPSET...
...THAT YOU BROKE THAT WOODEN SWORD.
RE-ALLY?
WELL, ANY-WAY...
I MEAN, HE DID TELL ME TO HURRY OVER AND GIVE IT TO YOU.
I WONDER IF HE KNEW THAT YOU WERE STILL HERE?
HUH? IT'S NOT LIKE I'VE SEEN HIM AROUND OR ANYTHING.

...WHAT'RE YOU STILL DOING IN THE CLASS-ROOM, ANYWAY?
GROAN
NATSUME WASN'T AT...
...THE AFTER-NOON LECTURE, RIGHT?

I HEARD HE WAS FIGHTING WITH THIS IDIOT HERE.
AND THAT KURA-HASHI WAS WITH THEM.
Now that you mention it...
THIS MIGHT ACTUALLY BE THE FIRST TIME HE'S DONE IT.
IT IS PRETTY RARE FOR NATSUME TO SKIP OUT ON CLASS.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
BUT IT WAS PROBABLY TO DO WITH THAT SPECIAL CUR-RICULUM, RIGHT?
YOU SAY HE WAS SKIPPING OUT ON CLASS.
CLICK
CLICK
CLICK
I-... IS THAT SO?

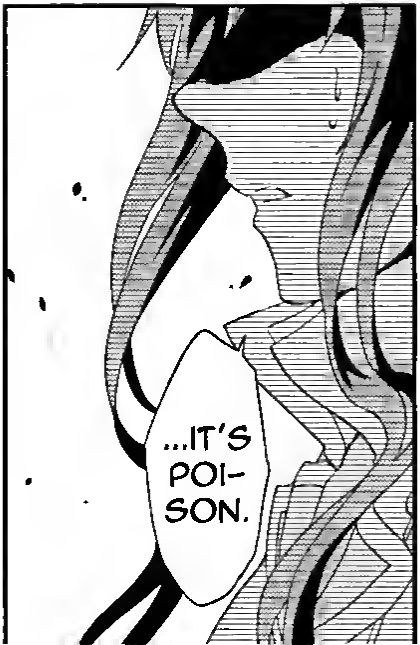
HUH?
TENMA, YOU'RE THE ONE WHO TOLD ME ABOUT IT ON OUR FIRST DAY.
THAT TEACHER WAS ALWAYS COMING TO GET HIM DURING BREAK TIME AND AFTER SCHOOL, Y'KNOW.
WAIT A SEC, HARU-TORA.
DO YOU MEAN...?
I'LL TELL YOU THIS MUCH.
THAT GUY BEFORE WASN'T A TEACHER.
HE'S A MAGIC INVESTI-GATOR.
YOU MEAN YOU HAVEN'T HEARD?
Huh?
...HARU-TORA.
WHAT'RE YOU TALKING ABOUT? WHAT INCIDENT?
HE WAS INVESTI-GATING THAT INCIDENT FROM EARLIER
WHAT OTHER KIND OF MAGIC INVESTIGA-TORS ARE THERE?
YOU MEAN FROM THE ONMYO AGENCY?
MAGIC INVES-TIGA-TOR?
WHOOSH!
MASTER HARU-TORA!!
THAT'S WHY I'M ASKING YOU!
Uh...

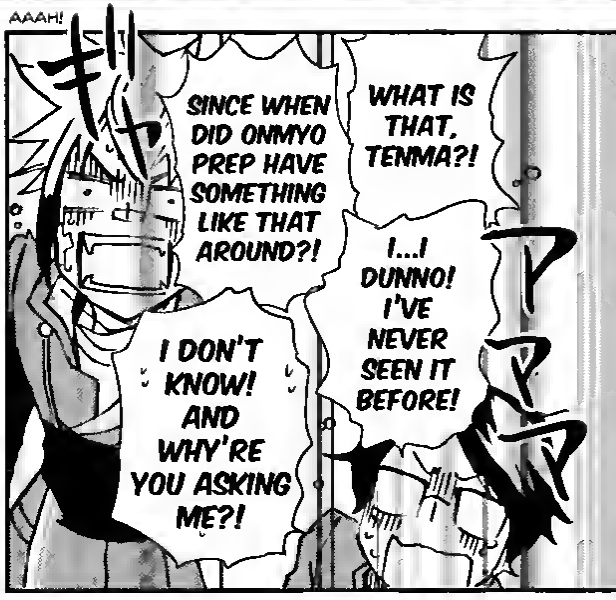
HUH?
BAM!
KON!
?!
WHA...?
GLINT
THUNK

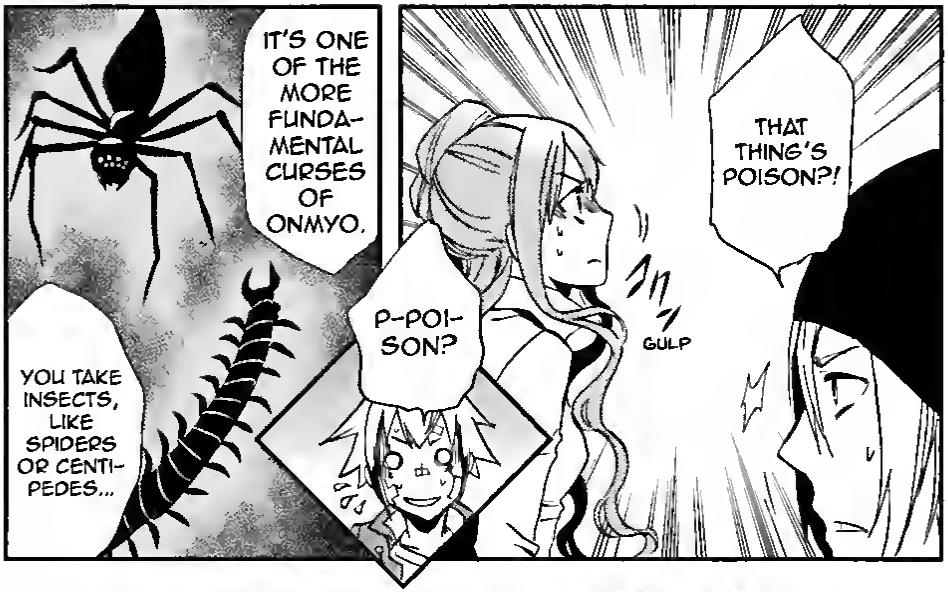
HUH?
KON!
?!
THUNK

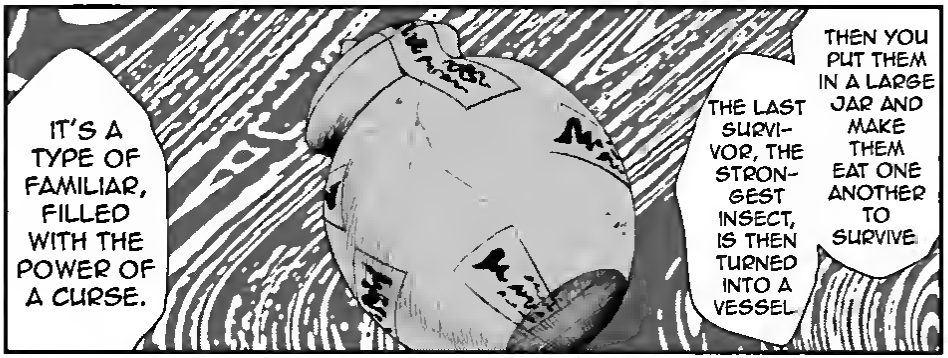
BAM!
GLINT
WHA...?

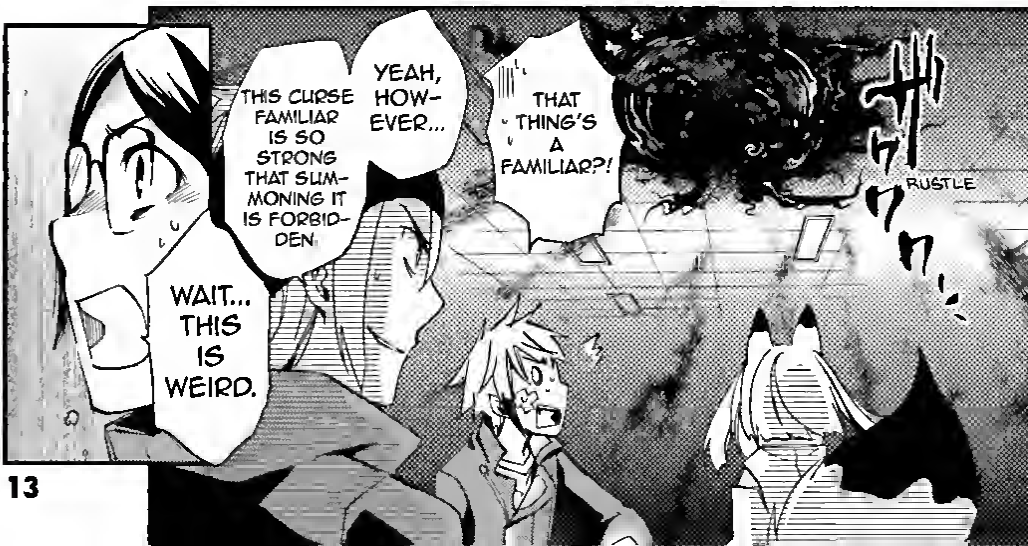
RUSTLE
...WHAT'S THAT THING?!
RUSTLE


...IT'S POI-SON.


AAAH!
SINCE WHEN DID ONMYO PREP HAVE SOMETHING LIKE THAT AROUND?!
WHAT IS THAT, TENMA?!
I DON'T KNOW! AND WHY'RE YOU ASKING ME?!
I...I DUNNO! I'VE NEVER SEEN IT BEFORE!


IT'S ONE OF THE MORE FUNDA-MENTAL CURSES OF ONMYO.
YOU TAKE INSECTS, LIKE SPIDERS OR CENTI-PEDES...
P-POI-SON?
THAT THING'S POISON?!
GULP


IT'S A TYPE OF FAMILIAR, FILLED WITH THE POWER OF A CURSE.
THE LAST SURVI-VOR, THE STRON-GEST INSECT, IS THEN TURNED INTO A VESSEL
THEN YOU PUT THEM IN A LARGE JAR AND MAKE THEM EAT ONE ANOTHER TO SURVIVE


WAIT... THIS IS WEIRD.
THIS CURSE FAMILIAR IS SO STRONG THAT SUM-MONING IT IS FORBID-DEN.
YEAH, HOW-EVER...
THAT THING'S A FAMILIAR?!
RUSTLE

THE SCHOOL BUILDING IS SUPPOSED TO BE SUR-ROUNDED BY A BARRIER.
NO FAMILIAR SHOULD BE ABLE TO INFILTRATE IT WITHOUT PERMIS-SION!
FWOOM
SLOWLY
OPEN
...!!
SHUDDER
WHOA!
GET DOWN!
KYAAH!

DRIP
WAFT
SHINK!
WHY, YOU...!
UGH ...!
BUAAAAH!
WHOA! IT'S AFTER ME!!
HA... HAKUO! KOKUFU!

SLASH
WHOOSH
SLASH
SLASH
STOP
WHOOSH
DAMN. IT'S GOING BACK WHERE IT CAME FROM!
KON, BE CAREFUL!

GYAAH!
SHUT UP, TENMA!
AAAAH!
NOOO!
HELP MEE!
YOU SHOULD BE HELPING US OUT HERE!
GYAAH!
LEAVE THIS TO ME...
Grr—
HYAAAH?!
My tail?!
CRAP!
IT MUST BE SOME SORT OF BARRIER.
Damn!
I'M NOT GETTING ANY CELL SIGNAL...
BUT WHEN DID IT...?!
HUH...?

A SPIRIT WALL...?!
BZZT
I GET IT... NO ONE'S NOTICING BECAUSE OF THIS BARRIER!
TENMA, HELP ME OUT HERE!
THOSE OTHER TWO ARE AMA-TEURS!
RUSTLE
RUSTLE
AH.
UMM...
WHOA!!
RUSTLE FLAP
WHIZ
RUSHING
!!

!
CRACKLE
KURA-HASHI...
MY BAD...
SHUT UP. NOW'S NOT THE TIME FOR TALKING!
RUSTLING
IT SEEMS LIKE...
...THEY'RE AIMING FOR HARU-TORA.
What?!
ME?
Huh...
NO WAY, THIS IS...

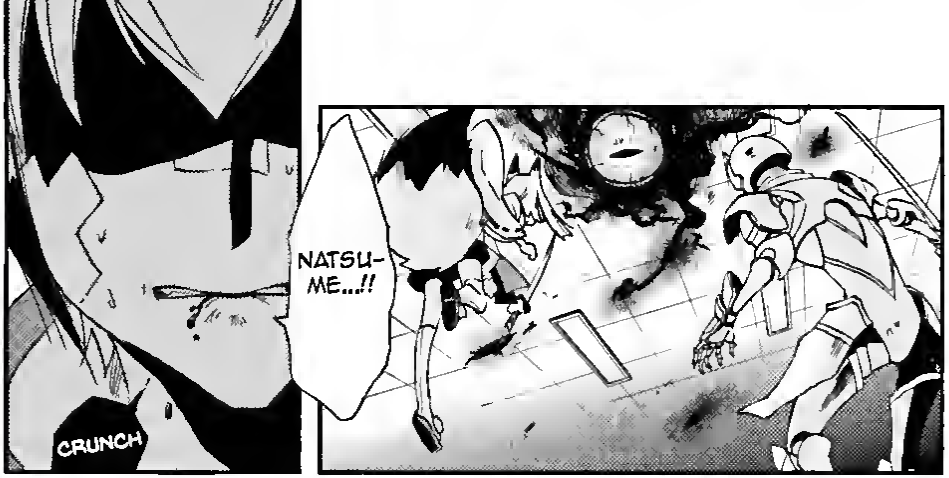
WHAT DOES ALL OF THIS MEAN?
...I SWEAR, THIS THING ISN'T PLAYING AROUND
THAT VERY WELL COULD BE.
FROM A YAKO DEVO-TEE?
STARE
URGH.
HARU-TORA.
YOU... UM...
YOU GUYS KNOW SOME-THING, DON'T YOU?!
...YEAH.
UUURAAAAH!
TWO DAYS BEFORE YOU TWO STARTED AT ONMYO PREP...
THE TRUTH IS...
I HEARD A RUMOR ABOUT THAT.
YEAH.
YOU KNOW THAT NATSUME IS YAKO'S--

ONE OF THE YAKO DEVOTEES MADE CONTACT WITH NATSUME.
THEY AMBUSHED AND KIDNAPPED HIM.
THEY EVEN CAST SPELLS AT EACH OTHER.
WHAT...?
THE REASON THEY CAME HERE...
...WAS TO TRY AND MAKE CONTACT WITH NATSUME.
THIS HAPPENED THAT RECENT-LY?!
THAT MAGIC INVES-TIGATOR FROM BEFORE...
...WAS LOOKING INTO THAT INCIDENT.
IT SEEMS THE DEVOTEE HAD...
...OTHER ALLIES WITH HIM.

BUT WHY WOULD A DEVOTEE DO SOMETHING LIKE THIS...?
LIKE WE KNOW WHAT THE HELL A RELIGIOUS FANATIC IS THINKING.
BUT THEY WERE ABLE TO TAKE DOWN THE TEACHERS—
THEY SAID THEY'VE...
...COME TO "HASTEN YAKO'S AWAKENING."
NO WAY...
SO ONE OF 'EM LEFT THIS POISON TO...?!

DAMMIT! SO THAT SPECIAL CURRICULUM STUFF...
IT WAS ALL A LIE! WHY WOULD NATSUME...?
NATSUME KEPT QUIET ABOUT THE WHOLE THING, HUH...?
HE PROBABLY DIDN'T WANT TO MAKE YOU WORRY.
YOU HAD JUST ENTERED THE SCHOOL, AFTER ALL, HARUTORA
LET'S DO OUR BEST, TOGETHER!!
THAT GIRL...!!
Gasp
...HOLD ON.
WHERE... IS NATSUME NOW?
AH...!
HARU-TORA.

YOU TOLD NATSUME BEFORE, RIGHT?
THAT HE'S NOT BRAVE ENOUGH TO GET CLOSE TO PEOPLE...
YEAH, BUT THAT WAS--!
DON'T YOU THINK IT'S NATURAL HE'D FEEL THAT WAY?
ALL THESE PEOPLE THINK HE'S YAKO'S REINCAR-NATION, RIGHT?
NO ONE WOULD THINK TO GET CLOSE TO HIM.
AND IF HE THOUGHT THAT HE WOULD CAUSE TROUBLE TO EVERYONE AROUND HIM...
..IT WOULD BE NATURAL FOR HIM TO HESITATE TO GET CLOSE TO ANYONE.
AND ALL THOSE CRAZY DEVOTEES FLOCK TO HIM.
I DON'T..
...WANT TO HEAR THIS FROM YOU!!
.....
THROB

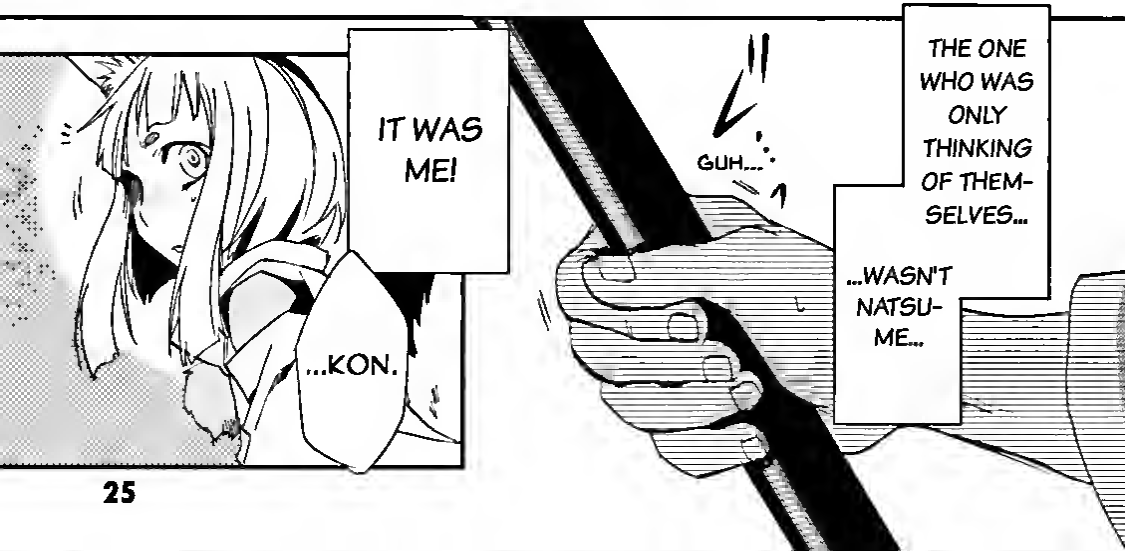


WHAT HAVE I BEEN DOING?

WASN'T I SUPPOSED TO HAVE LEARNED BY NOW?

I'VE BEEN TRYING TO SO HARD TO MAKE A PLACE FOR MYSELF HERE...

...THAT I FORGOT TO STOP AND THINK ABOUT NATSUME'S FEELINGS.



?!
SURPRISE
HUH?
STEP TO THE SIDE FOR A SEC.
KA-CHING
CHING
CHING
WHOOSH
WHOOSH
WHOOSH
WHOOSH

SPLASH
BURNING
SST
W... WAIT A SEC.
RELYING ON BRUTE STRENGTH AGAIN...?!
CHING
THUMP
SCREECH

BAM!
GULP
...KURA-HASHI.
TENMA.
BUT PLEASE.
JUST THIS ONCE, HELP ME OUT.
SORRY TO GET YOU INVOLVED IN THIS.

WE HAVE TO GET PAST THEM AND FIND NATSUME.
LEND ME YOUR STRENGTH.
TREMBLE
...
SURE...!
Hmm
LOOKS LIKE STAYING HERE WILL JUST GET ME KILLED ANYWAY.
SO I'VE GOT NO CHOICE.

AND AS LUCK WOULD HAVE IT, I HAVE AN IDEA HERE.
WELL, THAT MAKES THINGS SIMPLER THEN.
THANKS
BUT SINCE YOU TWO ARE THE MORE EXPERIENCED ONES HERE...
...I GUESS I'D BETTER RUN IT BY YOU FIRST.

...UGH.
HUH?
IT SEEMS YOU'VE WOKEN UP.

YOU'RE ...?!
YES.
I DON'T MIND. YOU CAN SCREAM IF YOU LIKE.
IT DOESN'T MATTER. NO ONE ABOVE WILL HEAR YOU.
BUT FOR YOUR OWN HONOR, I HOPE...
...YOU WILL REFRAIN FROM DOING ANYTHING SO BOORISH.

LORD NATSUME TSUCHI-MIKADO.
OUR GREAT KING OF THE NORTH STAR!
THAT NAME... YOU CAN'T BE...
YOU'RE A YAKO DEVOTEE, TOO?!
THERE ARE PLENTY OF US WITHIN THE ONMYO AGENCY WHO WOR-SHIP THE KING OF THE NORTH STAR.
WHY ARE YOU A YAKO DEVO-TEE?!
NO NEED TO BE SUR-PRISED
WHY...?
YOU'RE A REAL MAGIC INVESTI-GATOR

THAT IS A LIE ...!
IT'S ONLY NATURAL THAT THERE WOULD BE, YES?
ONLY PEOPLE WHO ARE DEEPLY INVOLVED IN ONMYO CAN UNDERSTAND THE GREATNESS OF THE KING OF THE NORTH STAR.
HOWEVER, AS FOOLISH AS IT IS, THE MAJORITY OF PEOPLE WOULD BURY THE KING IN DARKNESS. THEY CONSIDER HIS VERY EXISTENCE TO BE TABOO.
WHAT WOULD YOU CALL THEM IF NOT A GROUP OF INGRATES?
WE MUST WORK QUICKLY...
...IN ORDER TO RESTORE THE HONOR OF OUR KING WHO IS UNJUSTLY LOOKED DOWN UPON.
MORE-OVER...
THE KING WAS REBORN SO THAT THE DISHONOR COULD BE WIPED FROM HIS NAME.
LEAN
IT'S SUCH A WASTE...
...THAT IT'S COME TO THIS.

I WILL GIVE MY BODY, MY TALENTS, MY EVERY-THING...
...IN ORDER TO HELP OUR KING FURTHER HIS GREAT DEEDS.
LORD YAKO.
SHUDDER
...I--
I...I'M NOT YAKO...
DURING THE INCIDENT WITH THAT YOUNG PRODIGY, YOU FOUGHT ON EQUAL FOOTING WITH ONE OF OUR FELLOWS.
UNFORTUNATE THOUGH IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN FOR ONE OF OUR OWN TO HAVE BEEN SO IMPETUOUS...

WE HAVE COME OUT OF A LONG PERIOD OF HIDING...
...SO THAT WE CAN PREPARE FOR YOUR AWAKENING
WE EAGERLY AWAIT YOUR AWAKENING!
... YOU'RE WRONG
TWITCH
IT WASN'T JUST MY POWER.
FWOOSH
I WAS ONLY ABLE TO DO THAT BY COMBINING MY POWER WITH HARUTORA'S.
GLARE
YOU JUST DON'T GET IT.
DON'T ASSUME YOU KNOW...
...ANYTHING ABOUT ME OR HARUTORA!

...WHA...?
Y...
HAH.
YO...
YOU...
HAH.
SHUDDER
HOW UNCIVILIZED YOU ARE...!!
THIS IS THE KING...? I FIND THAT HARD TO BELIEVE...!
SHUDDER
SHAKING
HAH!
VERY WELL, NATSUME.
I CAN SEE YOU HAVE YET TO AWAKEN...
PANT
HOWEVER, ALLOW ME TO OPEN YOUR EYES TO ONE THING.
THAT HARUTORA BRAT YOU'RE OBSESSED WITH
HE SHOULD BE BREATHING HIS LAST ANY MOMENT NOW...

...DUE TO THE POISON I UNLEASHED.
...BUT THERE IS NO NEED TO MOURN HIM.
AS I WILL BECOME YOUR GUARDIAN...
...AS YOUR REPLACEMENT FOR HISHAMARU.
...NO...
YOU'RE LYING...

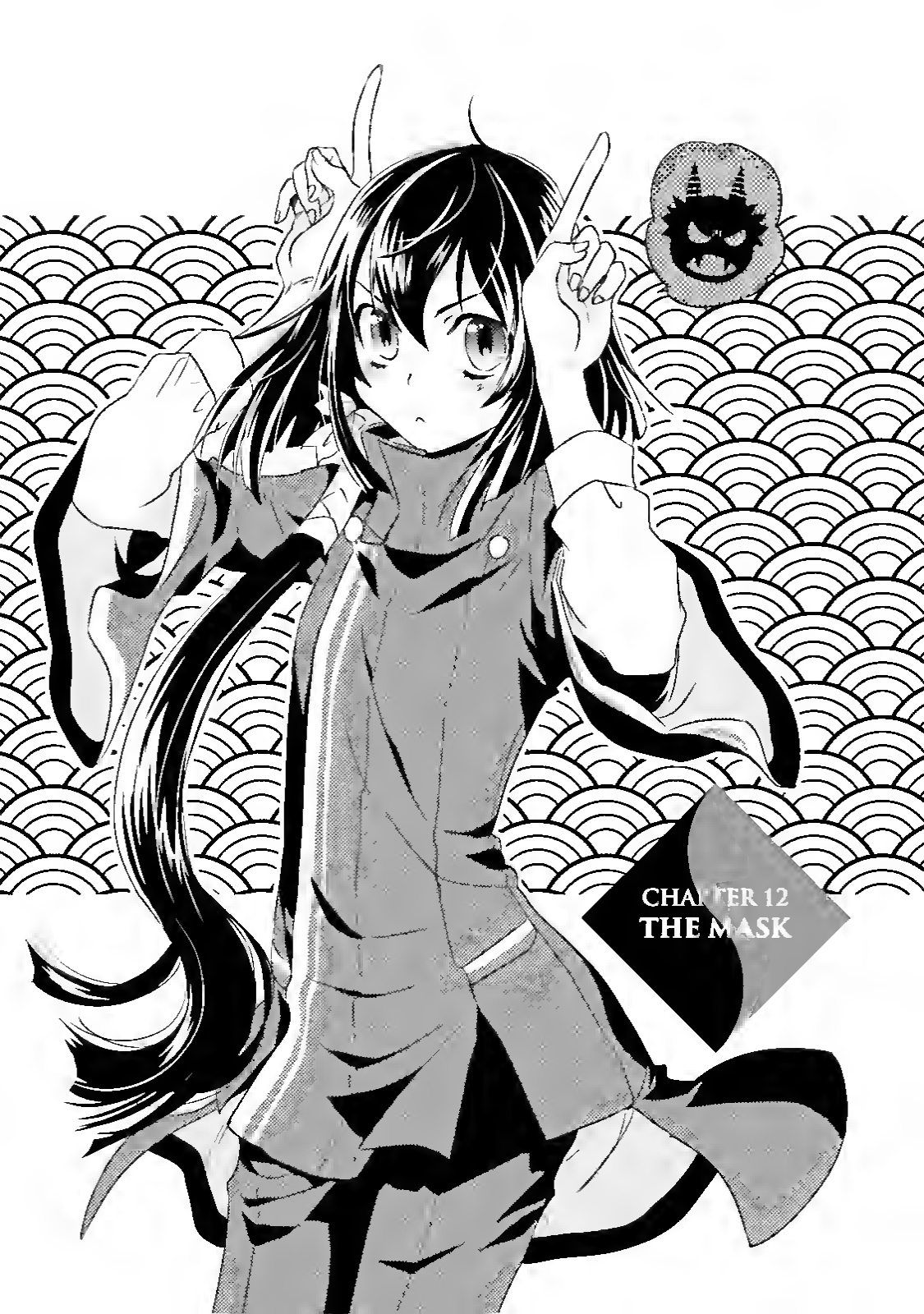
GUH-GUH-GUH
BANG!
THUD!
IT CAN'T BE...
RUSTLE
RUSTLE
MY POISON...
...IT WAS RE-PELLED?!
...ME...!
TAP
TAP
TAP
...TSU-ME!
TAP
TAP

END OF CHAPTER 11

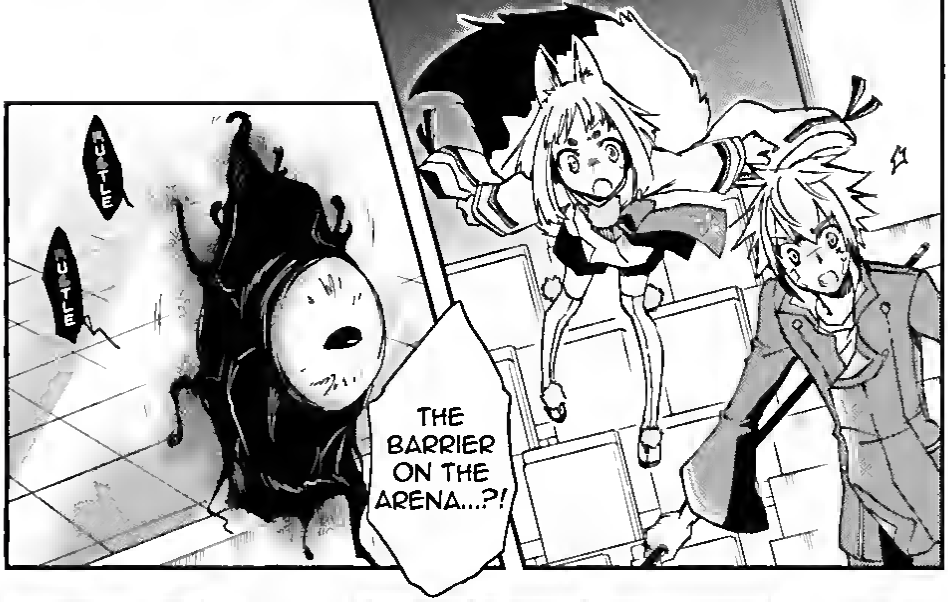
BAM
ARE YOU HURT, NATSU-ME?!

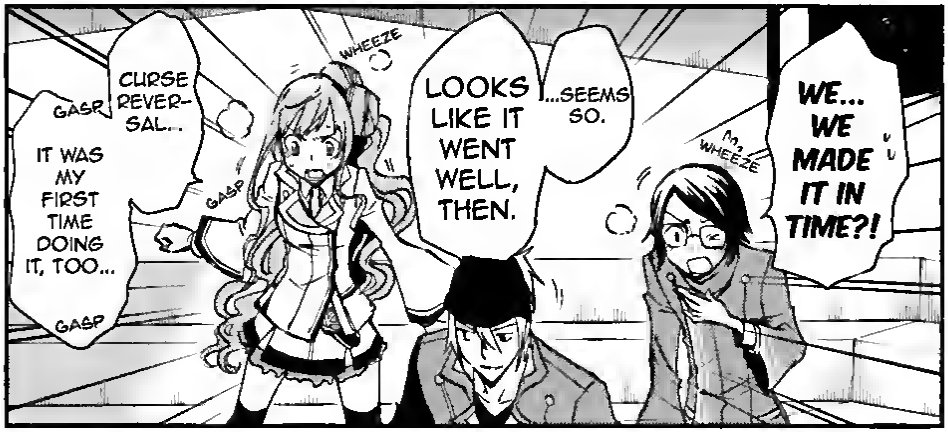
END OF CHAPTER 11

TOKYO
RAVENS


CHAPTER 12
THE MASK

HARU-TORA!!
TAP
TAP
TAP


CUTE
CUTE
THE BARRIER ON THE ARENA...?!


WHEEZE
GASP
CURSE REVERSAL..
IT WAS MY FIRST TIME DOING IT, TOO...
GASP
GASP
LOOKS LIKE IT WENT WELL, THEN.
...SEEMS SO.
WHEEZE
WE... WE MADE IT IN TIME?!

WHEEZE
BUT I DEFINITELY DIDN'T EXPECT THIS.
GASP
EITHER WAY, NOW WE KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON.

IF TOJI HADN'T SET OFF THE SPRINKLERS AND WEAKENED THE POISON'S POWER...
...I DON'T THINK IT WOULD'VE WORKED, EVEN WITH SOMEONE LIKE YOU, KURAHASHI.

I CERTAINLY DIDN'T EXPECT THAT THE CULPRIT WOULD BE A MAGIC INVESTIGATOR.
STARE
OH, SO THE SHREW OF THE KURAHASHI FAMILY HAS ARRIVED.
DESPITE HOW FREQUENTLY YOU DEFIED OUR KING... HOW UNEXPECTED.
FWUMP
RIP
...WH..
SIZZLE
GLARE
...WHY, YOU...!
YOU HAVEN'T DONE ANYTHING TO NATSUME, HAVE YOU?!
OF COURSE. THOUGH I DO HAVE HIM SPIRITUALLY RESTRAINED.
BUT I HAVEN'T THE LEAST INTENT OF HARMING NATSUME.
IMMATURE THOUGH HE MAY BE, HE IS STILL OUR KING.

WE ALREADY SENT A FAMILIAR TO INFORM THE TEACHERS!
YOU'VE GOT NOWHERE TO RUN NOW!
Y... YEAH! SO JUST HAND OVER NATSUME QUIE--
VERY WELL. I WILL ADMIT DEFEAT.
I WILL RELEASE HIM.
AND I WILL LEAVE, NICE AND QUIETLY.
WHAT?!
え!?
I HAVE ALERTED YOU TO MY EXISTENCE THIS TIME.
I WILL CONSIDER THAT IN ITSELF TO BE AN ACCOM-PLISHMENT.
WHY, YOU...!
DON'T YOU GET IT?

YOU CAN NEVER GO BACK TO THE ONMYO AGENCY.
IN FACT, QUITE THE OPPOSITE. NOW THEY'LL BE AFTER YOU.
DO YOU HONESTLY THINK YOU'LL BE ABLE TO GET AWAY FROM THEM?
Chuckle
I TOLD YOU BEFORE, DIDN'T I?
THERE WERE PLENTY OF MY COMRADES EVEN IN THE ONMYO AGENCY...
SNEER
NOW THEN, IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME.
I LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU AGAIN SOON.
HOLD IT, OLD GUY.

DO YOU HONESTLY...
SHING!
...THINK WE'RE GOING TO LET YOU GET AWAY?
WHA...?!
...OH?
GLARE
LET ME, HUH?

BUT I DON'T MIND. GO AHEAD. TRY ANYTHING YOU'D LIKE.
YOU ACT AS IF YOU HAVE THE POWER TO STOP ME.
D...DON'T DO IT, HARU-TORA!!
...
YEAH.
CHING
ALLOW ME TO SHOW YOU THE POWER...
...OF A TRUE ONMYO MAGE.
STOP RIGHT THERE. EVEN IF HE'S A ROTTEN BASTARD, HE'S STILL A PRO.
PANT PANT
EVEN I'M CLOSE TO MY LIMITS.

SURELY THE TEACHERS HAD TO HAVE NOTICED BY NOW.
AND IF THEY DO THEIR BEST, THEY CAN CATCH HIM BEFORE HE LEAVES THE SCHOOL.
HANDLE THIS WRONG AND...
...NATSUME COULD GET CAUGHT UP IN IT.
TCH...!
HUH
HOW WISE.
NOW THEN, I'LL TAKE MY LEAVE.
...YOU SAID YOU WOULD...
...BECOME MY NEW HISHA-MARU?

IT'S NOTHING TO ME WHAT GOES ON IN YOU PEOPLE'S HEADS.
FINE. FANTASIZE ALL YOU LIKE.
BUT I KNOW YOU'RE ALL DELUSIONAL.
MY ONLY FAMILIAR...
...IS HARUTORA, AND HARUTORA ALONE!
IF I HAD A HISHAMARU...
...THAT WOULD BE HARUTORA.
NATSUME...
YOUR MAJESTY...!

?!
WHY MUST YOU DISAP-POINT ME SO!
HOW CRUEL YOU ARE!
REGARDLESS OF HOW YOUNG A VESSEL YOU ARE, I CANNOT BELIEVE YOU'VE BEEN TRICKED BY THAT BOY.
AND NOW YOU SPEW SUCH BRASH WORDS TO ONE SUCH AS ME, WHO SHOULD ONE DAY STAND AT YOUR SHOULDER!
FWOOSH!
IT'S ONLY FITTING THAT I WOULD HAVE TO SHOW YOU...
...ADEQUATE PROOF THAT WE ARE THE WORTHY COMPANIONS OF THE KING OF THE NORTH STAR.
WHA...?!
THAT'S NOT GOOD..
SINCE IT'S COME TO THIS, I SUPPOSE IT IS INEVI-TABLE.
WHA...?

...AN...
OOOOHHHH!
...AN OGRE...?
IT ONLY HAS ONE ARM?!
A ONE-ARMED DEMON ...?
NO WAY!
MY GREAT AND POWERFUL KING.

YOU MAY HAVE FORGOTTEN THE NAME YOU BESTOWED UPON ME...
...THE TWO GUARDIANS THAT SERVED THE KING OF THE NORTH STAR YAKO TSUCHI-MIKADO.
I AM KAKU-GYOKI!!
TA-DA
AND I AM...
HISHA-MARU!!
WHA...?

NATSU-ME! CAN YOU TELL?!
SHUT UP, TENMA!
ギャアア
GYAAAAH!
IS HE THE REAL DEAL? THE REAL KAKU-GYOKI?!
NO WAY!
LIKE I'D KNOW ANYHOW!
アア
HHHH...
...I...
I... DON'T KNOW...!

AND IT IS A SEVERAL HUNDRED YEAR OLD DEMON.
IT IS SAID TO BE AN ACTUAL OGRE.
KAKU-GYOKI IS A SERVANT FAMILIAR.
IN OTHER WORDS, IT'S AN IN-TELLIGENT SPIRITUAL BEING THAT HAS BEEN MATERIAL-IZED.
EXCEPT THE MISSING ARM, ONE OF HIS DISTINCTIVE FEATURES...!!!
AND IF THAT'S TRUE, HE SHOULD BE ABLE TO CHANGE HIS APPEARANCE DRAMATI-CALLY.
NO ONE EVER KNEW WHAT HAP-PENED TO THEM... SO WHY...?!
ONCE YAKO PASSED AWAY, HISHAMARU AND KAKUGYOKI VANISHED INTO THE DARKNESS.
IT'S VERY SIMPLE, NATSUME.
I HAVE SHOWED MY TRUE FORM...
...AND STILL YOU SHOW NO SIGN OF AWAKEN-ING.
I'M NOT SURE HOW TO HANDLE THIS.

JUST AS YOU ARE THE REINCARNATION OF YAKO...
...I AM THE REINCARNATION OF HISHAMARU.
THUS, KAKUGYOKI IS WITH ME.
WE HAVE BEEN GATHERING OUR ALLIES...
...AND WAITING FOR THE MOMENT WHEN OUR MASTER WOULD AWAKEN.
WHAT?
YOU CAN'T --!
KAKUGYOKI
I GUESS YOU DON'T BELIEVE ME, YOUR MAJESTY--
HISHAMARU, THAT'S ENOUGH. FIRST, DEAL WITH THE SERVANT.

OOH.
HUH?
...WHA?!
WOBBLE
KER-THUMP
CRACKLE
CRACKLE
WHOA ...!

FWUMP
HARU-TORA?!
M-M-MASTER HARU-TORA!
...UMPH!
STUCK
BARRIER
FWIP
TCH...!
WHOOSH!
GO AROUND THE GATE FROM THE BACK!
GRAB

WOBBLE
UGH...!
HAKUO! KOKUFU! YOU GO, TOO!
HARU-TORA!! YOU OKAY?!
THUD
THUD
THUD
WHACK!
...TCH!
HARU-TORA!!

GUH...!
SLIDE
THROB
HEY... FOR ME TO NOT HAVE ANY BROKEN BONES...
..I MUST HAVE GOOD LUCK. THAT'S PRETTY RARE FOR ME...
STING
YOU'RE NOT HALF BAD...
GUH...
WOBBLE
OOHH.
HAHA, KAKU-GYOKI.
COME ON! AT LEAST TRY TO FIGHT BACK!
YOU'RE NOT NORMALLY ONE TO SAY ABSURD THINGS.
!

HOOOOOOM
OH, CRAP!!
BAM!
!!
ZOOM!

ZAP!
...TCH!!
!
THE MONK'S STAFF...?!
SKID
OH?
WHOA!
KER-THUMP
WELL, LOOK AT THAT YOU CAN HANDLE YOURSELF QUITE WELL.
I know, right? Hm hmmm
IT'S ENCHANTED SOMEHOW?!
THAT'S PRETTY AWESOME, MR. OTOMO!
I see you in a whole new light!

WHEEZE
SEEMS YOU'VE GOT A NEAT TOY THERE.
SHUT UP, IDIOT!
STOP!!
HAAAH
STOP, PLEASE ...!
PAUSE
I'M BEGGING YOU, STOP...!
OH... YOUR MAJESTY.
HAVE YOU DECIDED TO BECOME A BIT MORE OBEDIENT?
VERY WELL. I SHALL OBEY YOUR REQUEST.

DO YOU RECOG-NIZE THAT WE...
...ARE YOUR ALLIES?
HAVE YOU FINALLY COME TO UNDER-STAND?
PANT
PANT
...!!
NGH...
...YE--
WAIT, NATSUME.
...
YOU DON'T NEED TO PRETEND TO GO ALONG WITH THAT GUY. HE'S GOT A SCREW LOOSE.
KA-CHING!
!
AND YOU ESPECIALLY DON'T NEED TO RELY ON YOUR OLD UNDERLINGS.
PHEW

THUD
BECAUSE YOUR ALLY IS...
...RIGHT HERE!
SORRY ABOUT THIS AFTER-NOON.
I MAY NOT BE A VERY THOUGHT-FUL GUY.
BUT I DO STILL THINK...
...THAT YOU'RE GONNA NEED COURAGE.
EVEN MORE COURAGE THAN I THOUGHT YOU NEEDED THIS AFTERNOON.
...!
LISTEN UP, NATSU-ME.

EVEN IF SOME JERKS ARE SCARED OF YOU OR TRY TO CAUSE YOU TROUBLE.
NO MATTER WHAT, THERE ARE PEOPLE HERE WHO WILL LEND YOU A HAND.
AND NO MATTER WHAT, DON'T TRY TO CARRY THOSE BURDENS ON YOUR OWN.
FACE YOUR PAST. THE RUMORS.
DON'T GET DRAGGED INTO ANY OF THAT BORING CRAP.
FACE 'EM WITHOUT GETTING SCARED.
BE COURA-GEOUS.

YOU CAN DEPEND ON US.
AH...
I FINALLY...
...GOT ACROSS TO HER.
...HOW...

HOBBLE
HOW TRUE, KAKU-GYOKI.
I WANT YOU TO...
IT SEEMS THAT WE CANNOT IGNORE YOU.
YOU ARE NOTHING BUT A CLOWN THAT SEEKS TO DECEIVE OUR KING
THAT'S IT!
...HOW IDIOTIC!
SCREAM
ROAR
...PUT AN END TO THAT BRAT!!
ALL RIGHT GUYS, I'M COUNTING ON YOU. NOW!

SWOOSH
?!
KA-CHING
TAKE THIS!
SLASH
SLASH SLASH

KLAAAANG!
SWOOSH
FWUUSH
WHACK
BZZT
HA...
HARUTORA..!
DON'T BE AFRAID, NATSUME.
THIS IS NOTHING COMPARED TO THAT SPIDER.

WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE?!
KAKUGYO-KI, GO AT HIM WITH ALL YOUR POWER!!
ZAP
...TO THAT SUZUKA CHICK!!
AND A MAGIC IN-VESTIGATOR IS NOTHING COMPARED...
WHOOSH
SLASH
STAGGER
SLASH
GROWL
!
CRASH

CLANG
GROAN
CRASH
HA... H...!
GAH...

HAKUO, KOKU-FU!
LOOMF
PANT
WOBBLE
GASP
GROWL
IT'S NO USE. WE CAN'T STOP THAT THI--
STAB
STAB
SLASH

FWOOSH
BURST
!!
KA-SHA
KA-SHA
WHOOSH
THUNK

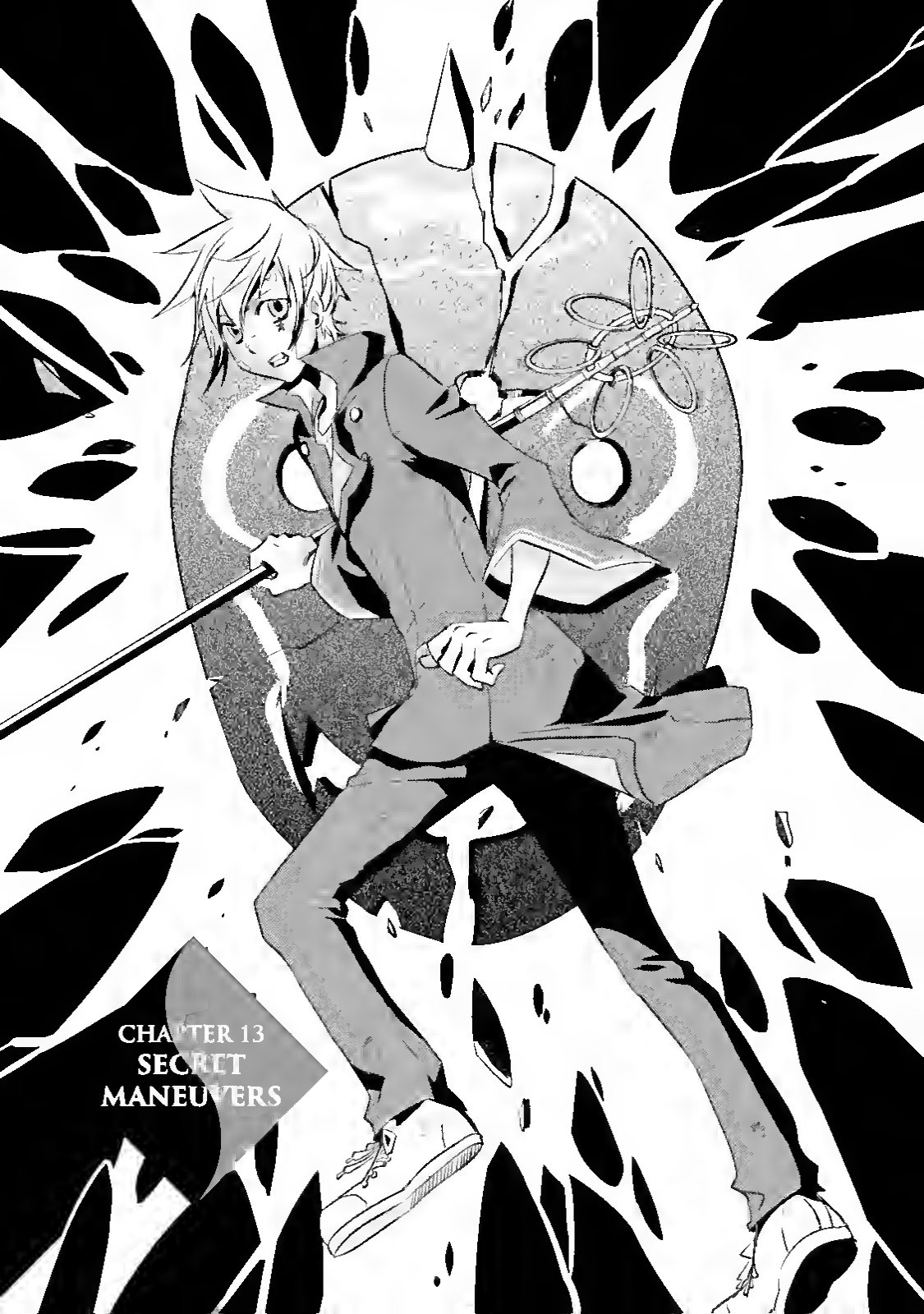
GLARE
THUD
GUH ...!
...TCH
RAAH...
GROWL
AA
AA
AA
AA
AAAH!

!!
CRACK
THUMP
あぁ
CLUNK

THUMP

!!
CRACK
CLUNK
あぁ

END OF CHAPTER 12

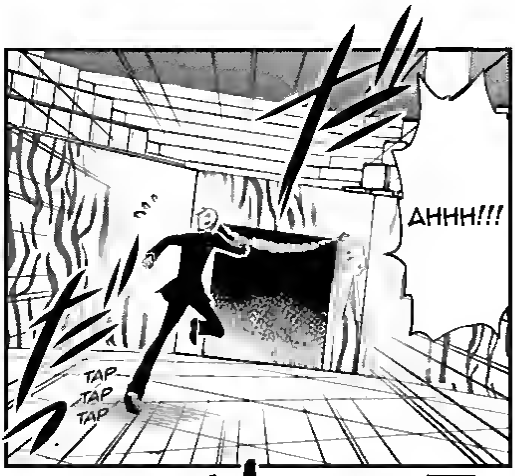

CHAPTER 13
SECRET
MANEUVERS

あああああ
UOOOOOH!
MASTER HARU-TORA!!

あおおお

YOU... YOU COMPLETE IMBECILE!
WH... WHAT'S UP WITH THAT GUY?
WHAT'S HAPPENING?!
BAM!
HE WON'T STOP UNTIL HE'S DESTROYED EVERYTHING AROUND HIM!!
NOW I CAN'T CONTROL HIM.
BAM!
THAT MASK WAS KAKUGYOKI'S SEAL...
BAM!
BAM!
SHF SHF
AH...
BAM!
AAAH!
HOW COULD YOU--!
DAMMIT... GOD DAMMIT!

YOU JERK...!!
PULL


AHHH!!!
TAP
TAP
TAP

TAP
TAP
TAP
BAM
TCH...!!
HARU-TORA!!

BUT...
WE CAN GET OUT OF HERE IF WE GO RIGHT NOW!
THAT FAMILIAR IS GOING BERSERK.
YOU'VE GOTTA HURRY UP AND GET OUT OF HERE!
!
TENMA?!

IF WE SEAL HIM UP IN HERE, WE CAN SPEND AS MUCH TIME AS YOU LIKE FIGURING OUT HOW TO DEAL WITH HIM LATER.
HE WON'T BE ABLE TO BREAK THROUGH THE BARRIER HERE.
BAM!
ARE WE REALLY GOING TO JUST LEAVE THAT THING BE?!
BAM!...
GASP
HARU-TORA!!
HEY, WAIT A SECOND.
HURRY, MASTER HARU-TORA!!
AH...
...CRAP.
NATSU-ME!!

PUSH
おぉぉぉぉ!!
OOOOH!
TAP TAP TAP-TAP
KA-CHING
FWIP
ZAP

SMACK
SO FAST...!
ROAR
OOOOH-
SMASH
!
JOLT

SHWIPP
STAB
!!
GRAB
IF WE CAN JUST MAKE IT TO THE GATE...
おぉおぉ
UOOOHHHH!

KUH...
ARE THEY DONE FOR?!
THUD
WE'VE GOTTA SLIP PAST HIS FEET.
TIMES LIKE THIS CALL FOR DESPERATE MEASURES.
THERE'S NO NEED.
...HARU-TORA.

RIP
RIP
RIP
RIGHT!
REMOVE THE TALISMANS STUCK ON MY BODY.
I ORDER YOU, IN THE NAME OF NATSUME TSUCHIMIKADO...
COME FORTH, HOKUTO!
AND DESTROY MY ENEMY!
BANG

RUSTLING
WHOOSH
SHOCK

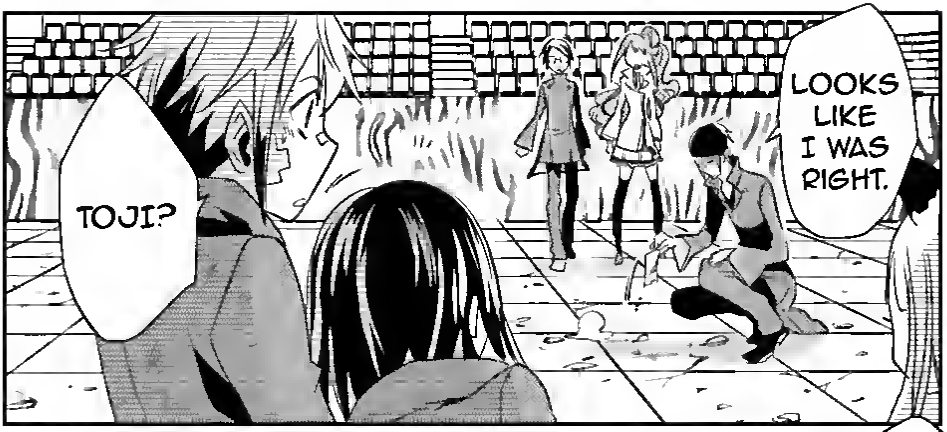
GRRR...
RUSTLING
...HOKUTO!
HMPH!
WHOOSH

SLASH
GAOOOO...
BZT
BZT
BZT

SMOULDERING
...WE...
...WON...?

M...M-MASTER HARU-TORA.
WELL DONE!
WOBBLE
GULP
DID WE...
...REALLY DEFEAT KAKU-GYOKI?
I'M AT MY LIMIT...
どうよ?
How'd I do?
Heh... So?
EXHAUSTED
NAH, I DIDN'T DO MUCH...
URK... NEVER MIND...
THUNK
...MADE IT THROUGH...
WE...
TAP

...HARU-TORA.
NATSUME? YOU OKAY?
...YEAH.
I'M SO GLAD YOU'RE HERE...
THANKS... ...FOR COMING TO SAVE ME.
STARE
...I FIGURED AS MUCH.
HEY..!!
HE--
GULP
BA-DUMP

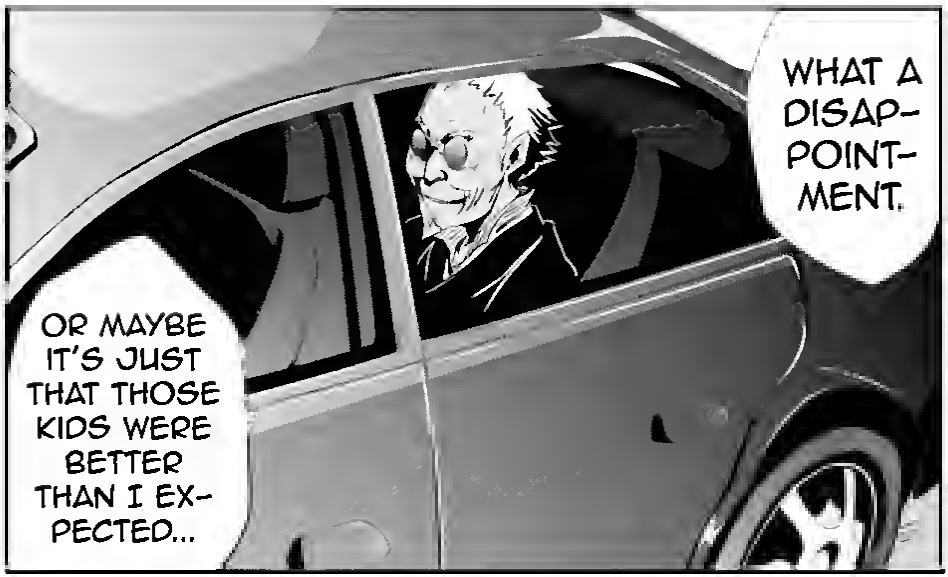

LOOKS LIKE I WAS RIGHT.
TOJI?

I THOUGHT SOME-THING WAS UP THE WHOLE TIME.
I MEAN, THAT THING WAS PLENTY STRONG.
GRAB
...BUT A REAL OGRE WOULD'VE BEEN MUCH WORSE.

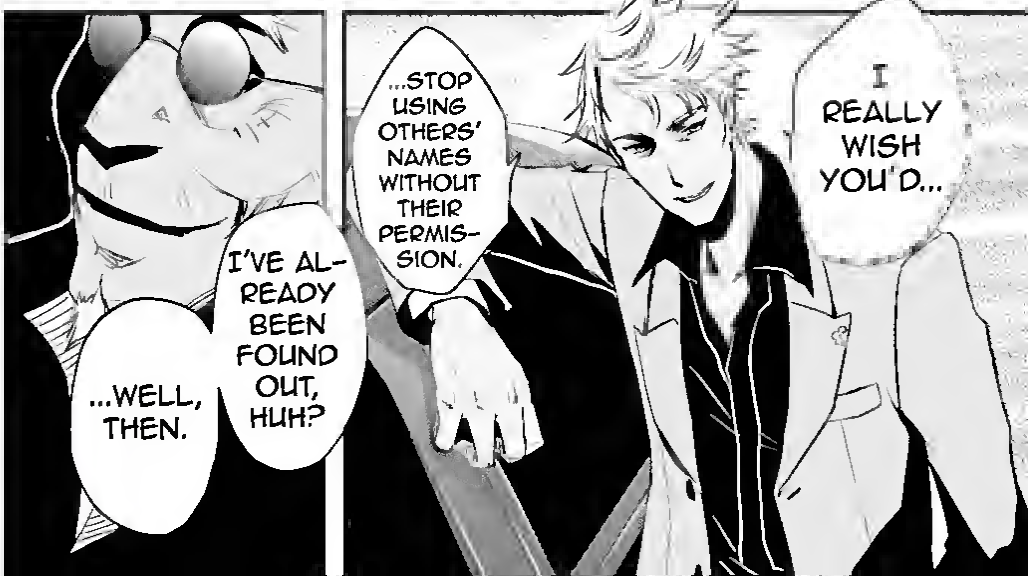
HUH?
GASP
A TAL-ISMAN FAMIL-IAR?!
AND... IT'S STILL BRAND NEW.
SO THAT MEANS THAT THING WAS...?

ISN'T THAT A COMMERCIAL TALISMAN?
H-HOLD ON.
WHY WOULD A COMMERICAL TALISMAN FAMILIAR--
KAKUGYOKI WASN'T A MAN-MADE FAMILIAR.
IT'S A SERVANT FAMILIAR, RIGHT?
GASP
...SO THAT MEANS...
THAT KAKUGYOKI...
...WAS A FAKE?

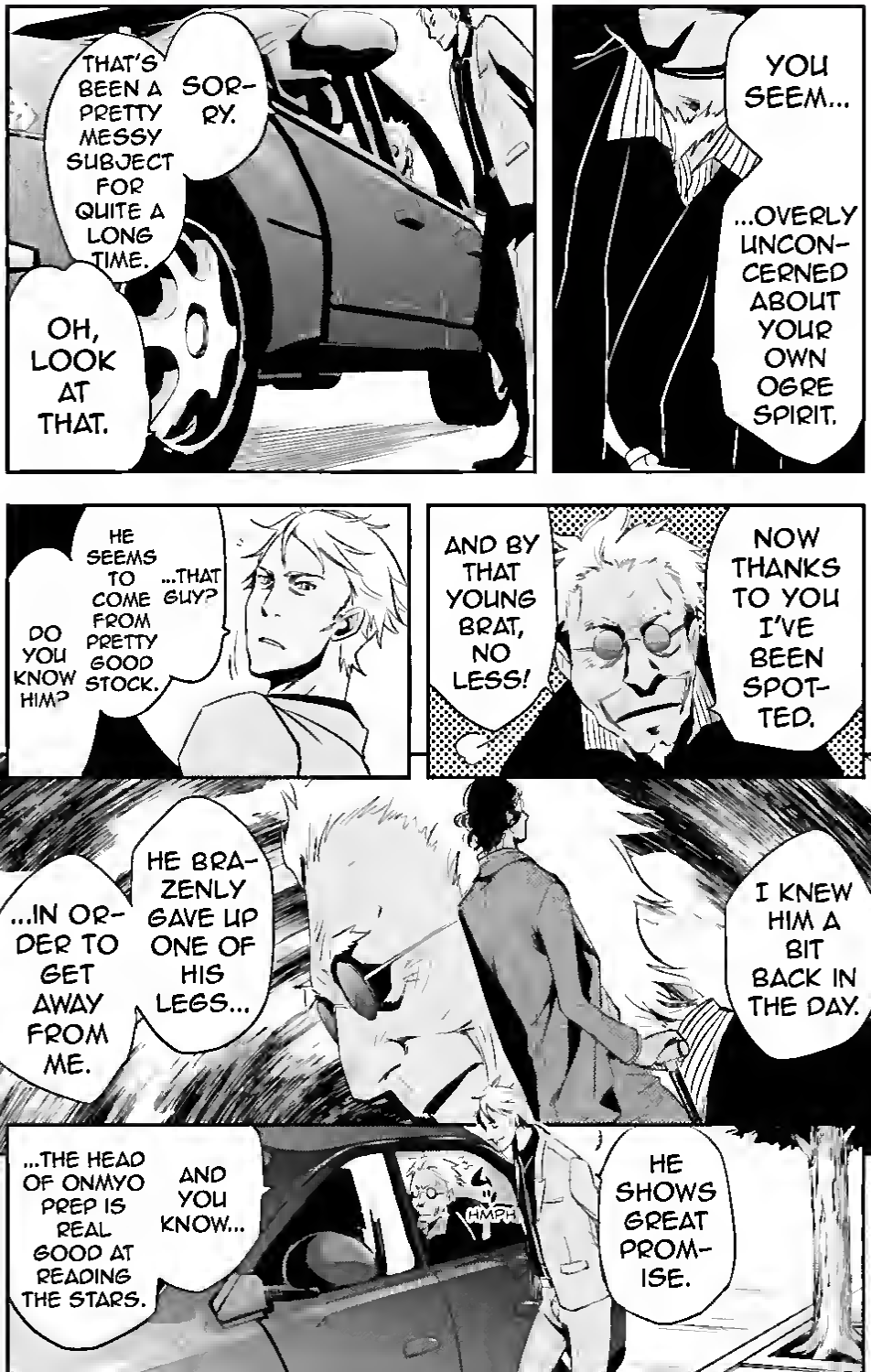
SILENCE
TAP
TAP
TAP
TAP
BAM
THEY TOOK CARE OF THAT QUITE QUICKLY.


WHAT A DISAP-POINT-MENT.
OR MAYBE IT'S JUST THAT THOSE KIDS WERE BETTER THAN I EX-PECTED...

HEY.
SIGH


I REALLY WISH YOU'D...
...STOP USING OTHERS' NAMES WITHOUT THEIR PERMIS-SION.
I'VE AL-READY BEEN FOUND OUT, HUH?
...WELL, THEN.

ONLY 60 YEARS.
AND IT'S NOT LIKE I MISS THE PAST.
IT'S BEEN MORE THAN 60 YEARS, HASN'T IT?
HOW COLD OF YOU.
NOT REALLY.
YOU'RE WORRIED TOO, HUH?
WHAT ABOUT TRYING TO SETTLE DOWN?
EVERY TIME YOU GET INVOLVED, THINGS JUST GET MESSIER.
I'VE ACCUMULATED A LOT OF RESENTMENT OVER THESE PAST 60 YEARS.
I MISS THE GOOD, OLD TIMES.
OH, REALLY?
That's unexpectedly quick-tempered.
...HMM. I TAKE IT YOU'VE NOT BEEN IN CONTACT WITH HISHAMARU, AS USUAL?
THAT IS SOMETHING ELSE YOU NEED NOT KNOW.
I'M DIFFERENT FROM HISHAMARU.
I JUST DON'T SEE ANY NEED TO GET INVOLVED DIRECTLY.
I WOULDN'T SAY "AT ALL," EXACTLY.
ARE YOU...
...SURE YOU'RE NOT AT ALL WORRIED?


SORRY.
THAT'S BEEN A PRETTY MESSY SUBJECT FOR QUITE A LONG TIME.
OH, LOOK AT THAT.
YOU SEEM...
...OVERLY UNCONCERNED ABOUT YOUR OWN OGRE SPIRIT.
NOW THANKS TO YOU I'VE BEEN SPOTTED.
AND BY THAT YOUNG BRAT, NO LESS!
...THAT GUY?
HE SEEMS TO COME FROM PRETTY GOOD STOCK.
DO YOU KNOW HIM?
I KNEW HIM A BIT BACK IN THE DAY.
HE BRAZENLY GAVE UP ONE OF HIS LEGS...
...IN ORDER TO GET AWAY FROM ME.
HE SHOWS GREAT PROMISE.
HMPH
AND YOU KNOW...
...THE HEAD OF ONMYO PREP IS REAL GOOD AT READING THE STARS.

YOUR IDEA OF FUN IS A REAL PAIN.
ANY-WAY.
OUTWIT-TING THEM FOR THE TIME BE-ING IS FUN.
PEOPLE ARE GONNA BE ABLE TO TELL THIS IS YOUR PLAN, AREN'T THEY?
THAT'S ALL I WANTED TO TALK ABOUT.
STOP
TURN
BUT AT LEAST STOP USING MY NAME IN YOUR BORING PRANKS.
I WON'T BOTHER CRITICIZ-ING YOUR HOBBIES.
HUH? WHAT BRAT?
TORA.
... THOUGH, NOW THAT YOU MEN-TION IT...
WHAT'S WITH THAT BRAT?

Note: Tora means "tiger," as well as being part of Haruto's name.

NOW DRAGON AND TIGER HAVE APPEARED.
AH, HE'S A SON FROM ONE OF THE BRANCH FAMILIES, I HEAR.
WELL, I GUESS THE TIGER IS PRETTY WEAK AT THE MOMENT.
...NO. NOT REALLY.
DON'T PUSH YOURSELF TOO HARD...
...DOMAN.
...DID HE DO SOMETHING TO YOU?

Hmph.
Hey, now.
THOUGH, AS I SAID BEFORE, I'M NOT GOING TO TALK ABOUT YOUR HOBBIES.

...YOU CERTAINLY HAVEN'T CHANGED.
YOU'RE VERY LOYAL...
...AREN'T YOU?
300MT
DAMN...
HUFF
PUFF

WHY'D THIS HAVE TO HAP-PEN?!
GOD DAM-MIT...!
PUFF
HUFF
DAMN ...
DAMN ...

AH, DAM-MIT...!
HOW CAN I EXPLAIN THIS TO HIM?!

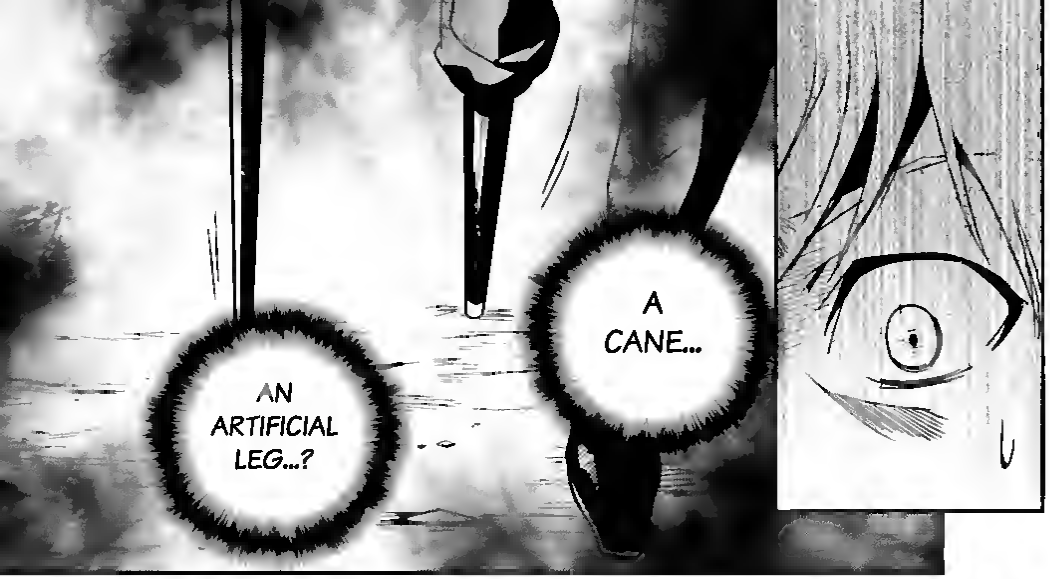
SO WHY WOULD KAKU-GYOKI...
PUFF
HUFF
I'M HISHAMA-RU.
I'M HISHAMA-RU, RIGHT?

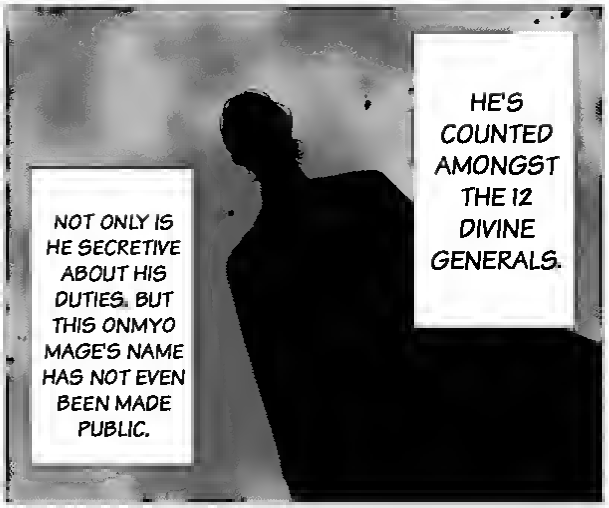
WHAT DO I SAY...?
SHALL I TELL YOU ABOUT YOUR PAST LIFE?

FOR NOW...
...ALL I CAN DO IS FOLLOW HIS ORDERS.
MAN, I STOP PAYING ATTENTION FOR A BIT AND...
...THE QUALITY OF THE MAGIC INVESTIGATORS GOES DOWN THIS FAR?
HUH?!
SHUDDER

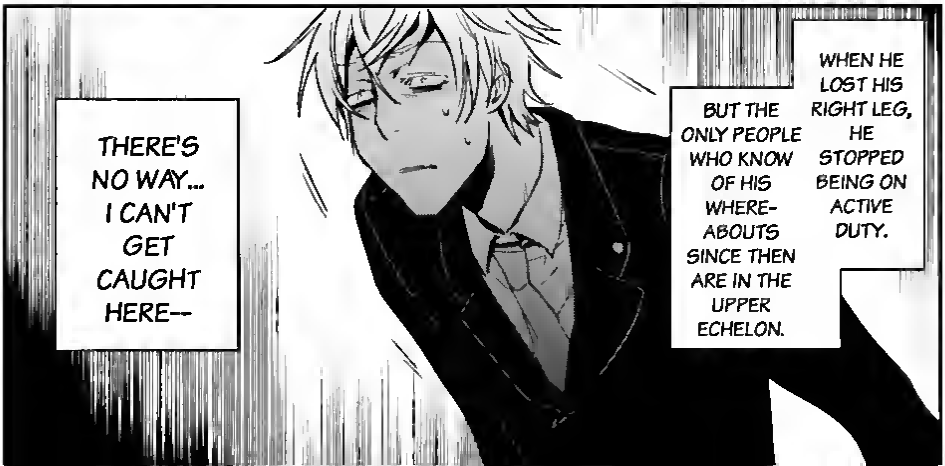
WH...
...WHO'RE YOU?!
...OR...
...IS IT JUST THAT THE BETTER CANDIDATES PREFER JOINING THE EXORCISM BUREAU?
THERE ARE MORE BAD INFLUENCES, CAUSING SPIRITUAL DISASTERS.
ALL KINDS OF TURBULENT THINGS.

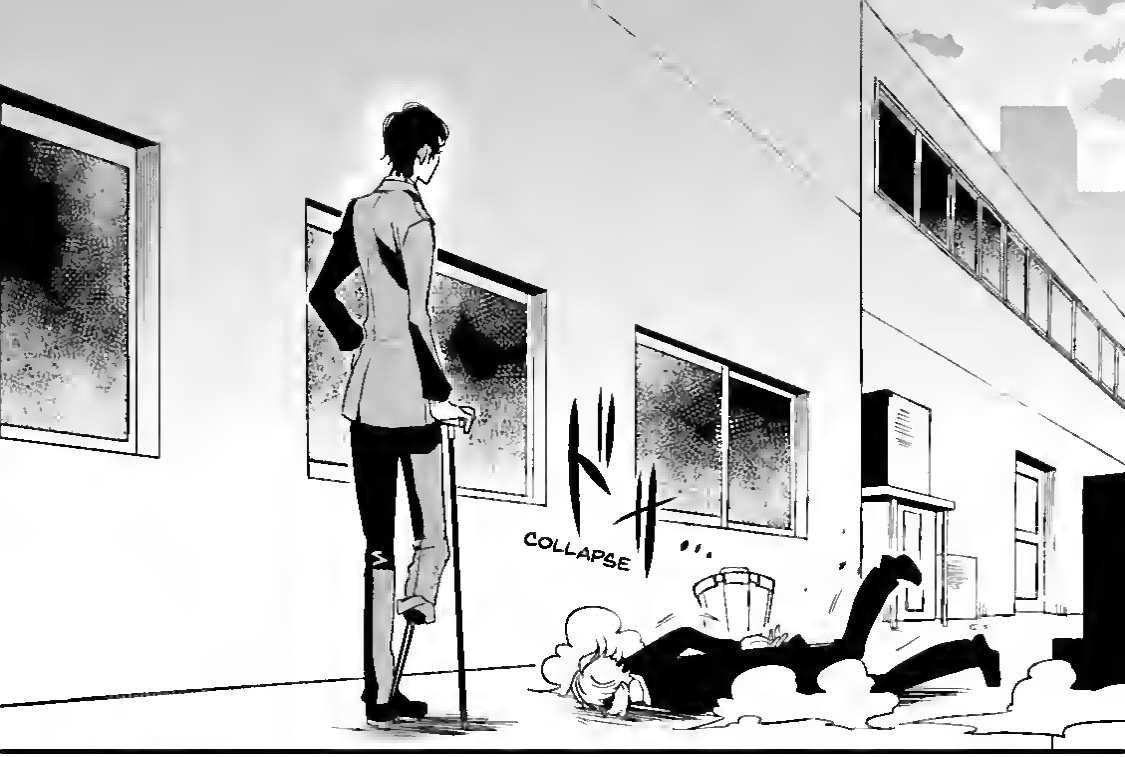
!!
FLINCH
...
I CAN'T MOVE...
NO WAY... I DIDN'T SENSE HIS MANTRA NOR HIS PRESENCE!!
CLICK
THIS IS... AN IMMOBILIZING SPELL?!
CLICK
JUST WHO IS THIS MAGE...?

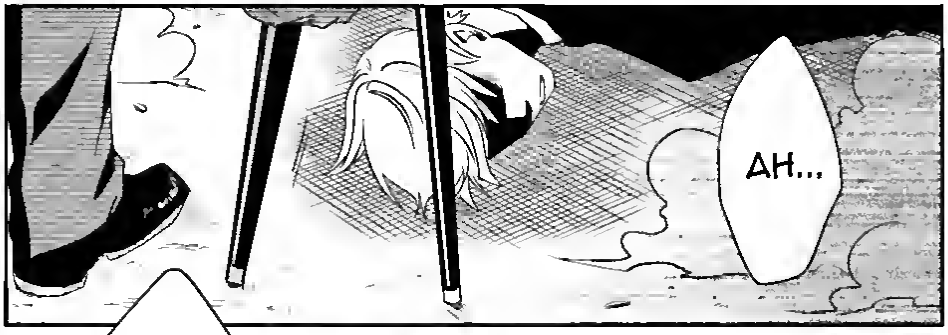

A CANE...
AN ARTIFICIAL LEG...?

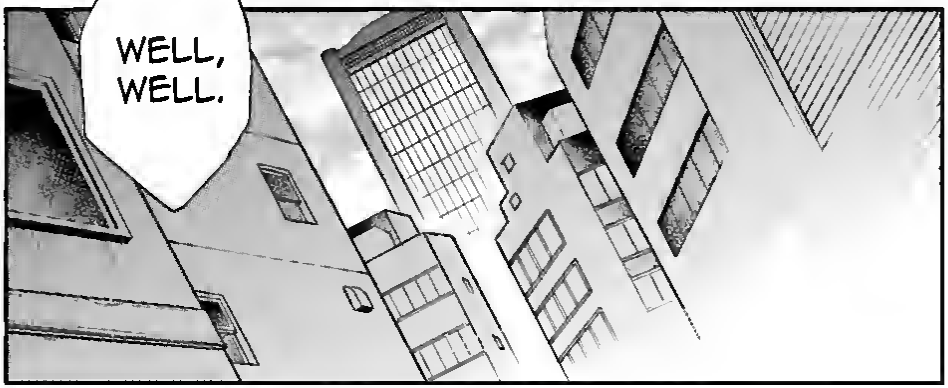

HE'S COUNTED AMONGST THE 12 DIVINE GENERALS.
NOT ONLY IS HE SECRETIVE ABOUT HIS DUTIES, BUT THIS ONMYO MAGE'S NAME HAS NOT EVEN BEEN MADE PUBLIC.

NOW THAT I THINK ABOUT IT, I HAVE HEARD OF SOMEONE LIKE THIS.
A RUMOR OF A VIR-TUOSO MAGIC INVESTI-GATOR.


WHEN HE LOST HIS RIGHT LEG, HE STOPPED BEING ON ACTIVE DUTY.
BUT THE ONLY PEOPLE WHO KNOW OF HIS WHERE-ABOUTS SINCE THEN ARE IN THE UPPER ECHELON.
THERE'S NO WAY... I CAN'T GET CAUGHT HERE--


COLLAPSE


AH...


WELL,
WELL.

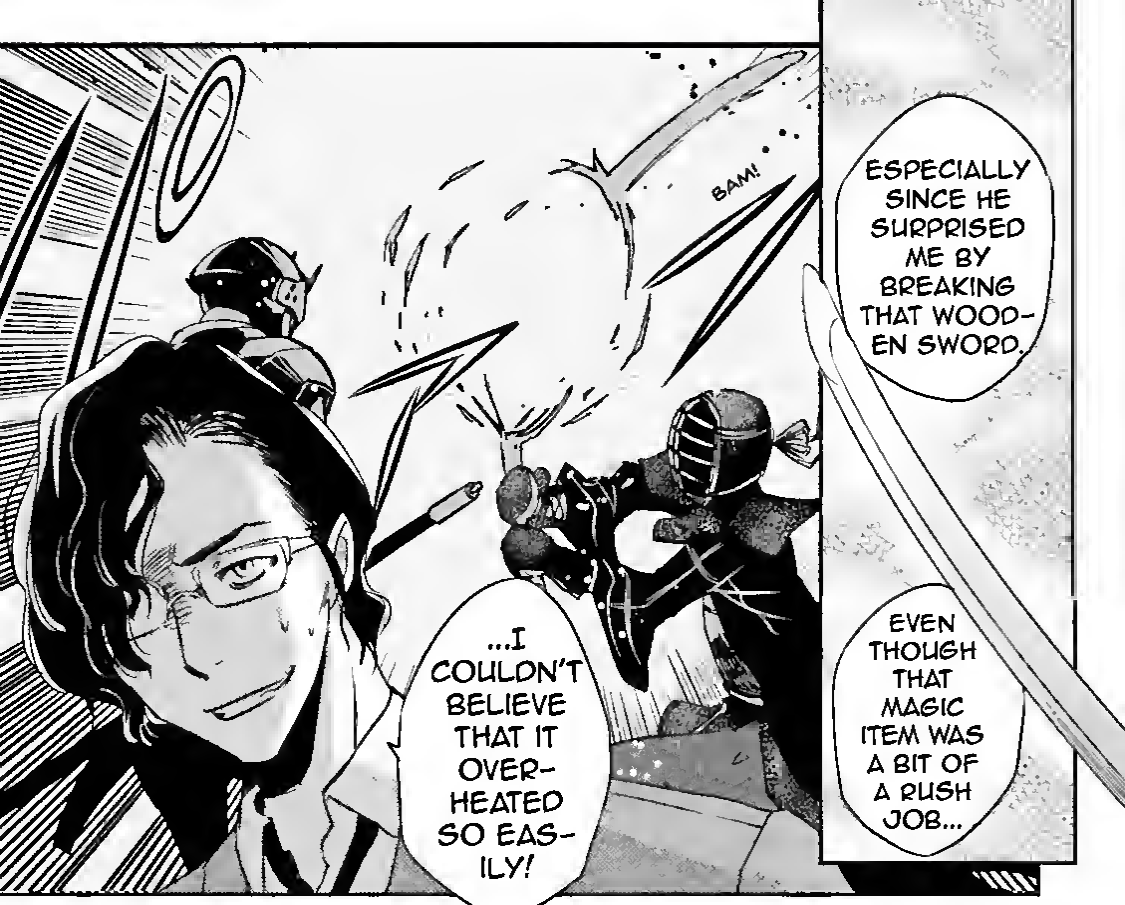
END OF CHAPTER 13

CHAPTER 14
A MISUNDER-
STANDING

YOU'VE BEEN WORKING OVER-TIME, I SEE.
...SIGH
THERE HAVE BEEN A LOT OF UNUSU-ALLY STEREOTYPI-CAL UNDERLINGS AROUND LATELY...
I WOULD GUESS HE HAD BEEN SUB-JECTED TO RATHER DEEP-LEVEL SUGGESTIONS FOR QUITE SOME TIME.
Gah!
PRIN-CIPAL ...
THE PERSONALITY HE DISPLAYED AT THE ARENA WAS QUITE DIFFERENT FROM WHAT WE SAW JUST NOW.

MUMBLE
WHY DO YOU KEEP JUMPING IN ON MY INVESTIGATIONS...?
OF COURSE.
I WOULDN'T LEAVE OUR PRECIOUS STUDENTS COMPLETELY ON THEIR OWN.
OH, YOU SAW THAT? HIM PLAYING DOUBLE ROLES?
...ONCE AGAIN ...
...I THANK YOU FOR YOUR HARD WORK, MR. OTOMO.
SIGH
NOT AT ALL, PRINCIPAL!
I DIDN'T SAY ANYTHING.
GRIN
GRIN
GRIN
DID YOU SAY SOMETHING?
AT THE VERY LEAST, ONCE HE SUMMONED THAT FAKE KAKUGYOKI...
...YOU SHOULD HAVE INTERVENED.
HOWEVER, DON'T YOU THINK YOU'VE EXPOSED THE STUDENTS TO A BIT TOO MUCH DANGER THIS TIME?
IT'S HARD TO CONGRATULATE YOU ON A JOB WELL DONE.

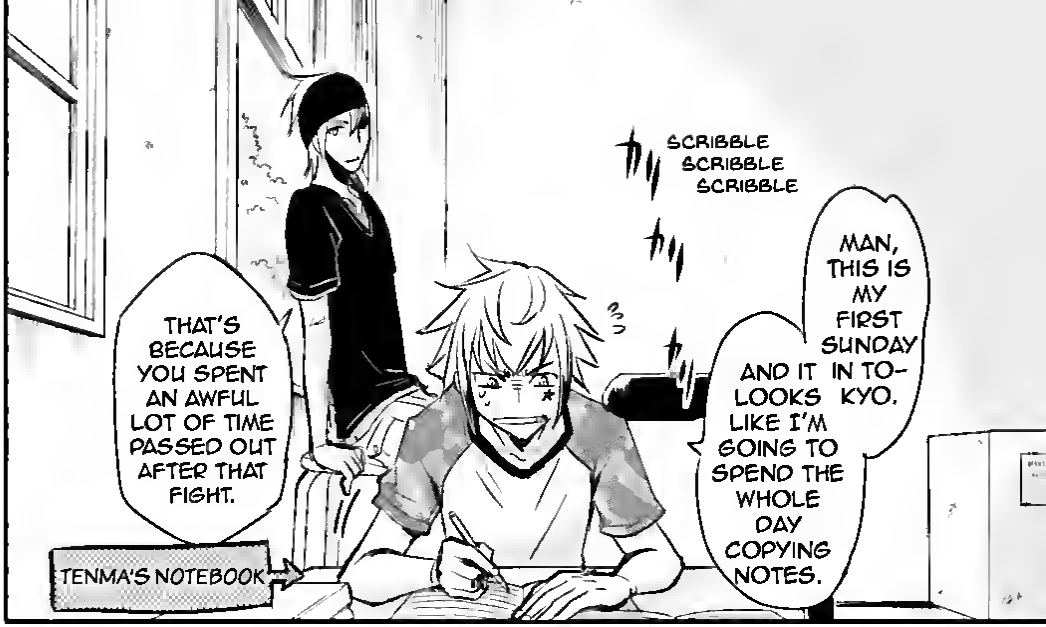
YOU DO KNOW THAT THERE WERE TWO WAY BIGGER FISH TO FRY, RIGHT?
NEVER MIND THE DUMB LITTLE STALKER.
COME ON. BE SERIOUS!
IF YOU NEED A FAMILIAR TO PUSH YOUR WHEELCHAIR, I CAN MAKE ONE FOR YOU.
...IT WOULD INTERFERE WITH MY FUTURE DUTIES AS AN INSTRUCTOR.
IF I LOST MY ONE REMAINING LEG TOO...
WHAT?
OH, NOTHING.
ALSO, IF YOU'RE WORRIED, I DID TAKE SOME PRECAUTIONARY MEASURES.
MUMBLE
MAN, WHEN IS THIS OLD LADY GONNA KICK THE BUCKET?
WOW, HOW VERY GENEROUS OF YOU.

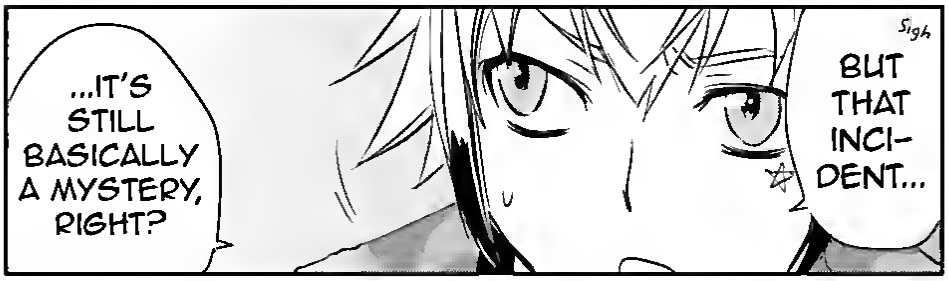

BAM!
...I COULDN'T BELIEVE THAT IT OVER-HEATED SO EAS-ILY!
ESPECIALLY SINCE HE SURPRISED ME BY BREAKING THAT WOOD-EN SWORD.
EVEN THOUGH THAT MAGIC ITEM WAS A BIT OF A RUSH JOB...

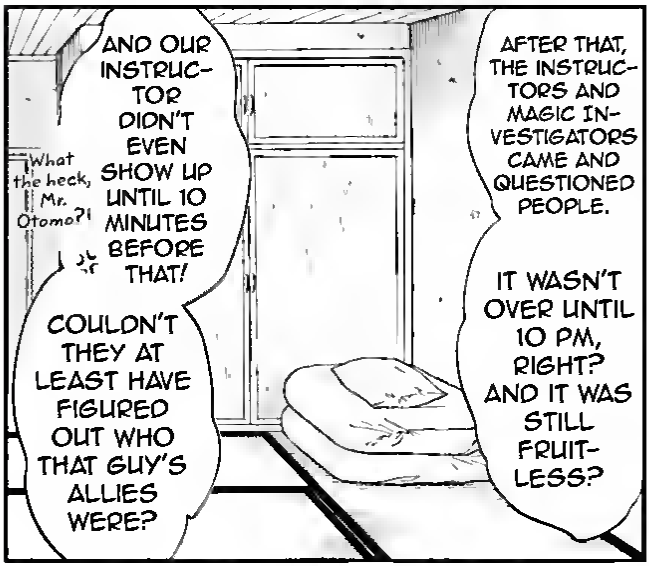
FWIP, FWIP, FWIP, FWIP
...BUT INI-TIALLY ...
AND ALL OF THAT WAS BECAUSE I PLANTED THE SEEDS FOR THEM TO BECOME CLOSER YESTERDAY.
THE BEAUTIFUL POWER OF FRIENDSHIP WAS ABLE TO DEFEAT THE EVIL PSEUDO-DEMON!
BUT THAT MONK'S STAFF CERTAINLY CAME IN HANDY, DIDN'T IT?
AND KYOKO, YOUR GRAND-DAUGHTER DEFINITELY PLAYED A BIG PART IN THAT AS WELL!

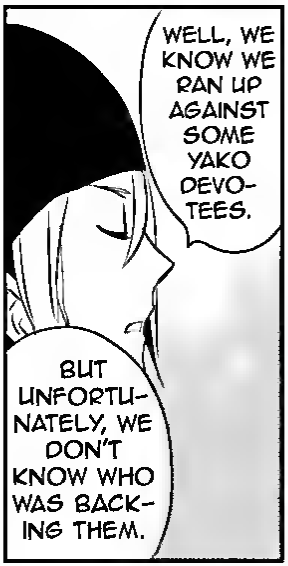
...WE KNEW LONG AGO THAT HE HAD CONNEC-TIONS TO THE "TWIN HORN SYNDICATE".
BUT WE DIDN'T KNOW ANY-THING ELSE.
YOU KNEW THIS IDIOT WAS ONE OF THE YAKO DEVOTEES A LONG TIME AGO, BUT YOU LET HIM BE.
...DIDN'T WE START DOWN THIS DANGER-OUS ROAD BECAUSE OF YOU, PRINCIPAL?
WELL, IT IS TRUE THAT WE NEED THEM TO ACCUSTOM THEMSELVES TO SUCH THINGS AS THIS...
AND YET YOU CAN'T CON-GRATU-LATE ME ON A JOB WELL DONE?
BUT ISN'T THAT USING THE STU-DENTS AS BAIT?
THIS WAS A GOOD OPPOR-TUNITY.
NO, NOTHING.
DID YOU SAY SOME-THING?
MUMBLE
... HYPO-CRITE ...
SHRUG
I'LL BE SURE TO WARN THEM NEXT TIME.

I'LL LEAVE YOU TO TAKE CARE OF THE REST.
WHOOSH
I'LL NEED TO GET IN TOUCH WITH MY OWN CONTACTS IN THE ONMYO AGENCY.
...UM.
DO YOU THINK ...
...I'LL BE ABLE TO GET SOME OVER-TIME PAY FOR THIS?
HM? BUT ISN'T THIS FOR THE SAKE OF OUR DEAR STUDENTS?
MONEY SHOULDN'T BE SUCH A BIG DEAL, SHOULD IT?
Ho ho ho
ヒラリ
LEAP
...MONEY DEFI-NITELY IS A BIG DEAL...
BLEEHHH!
UGH-HH...

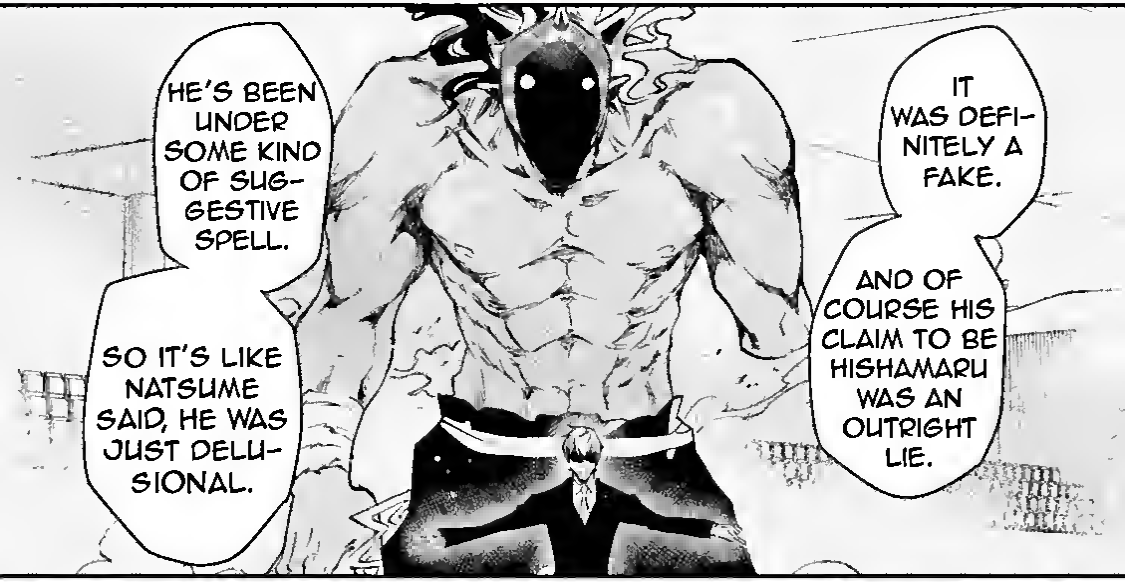

SCRIBBLE SCRIBBLE SCRIBBLE
MAN, THIS IS MY FIRST SUNDAY IN TOKYO. AND IT LOOKS LIKE I'M GOING TO SPEND THE WHOLE DAY COPYING NOTES.
THAT'S BECAUSE YOU SPENT AN AWFUL LOT OF TIME PASSED OUT AFTER THAT FIGHT.
TENMA'S NOTEBOOK


Sigh
BUT THAT INCIDENT...
...IT'S STILL BASICALLY A MYSTERY, RIGHT?


AND OUR INSTRUCTOR DIDN'T EVEN SHOW UP UNTIL 10 MINUTES BEFORE THAT!
What the heck, Mr. Otomo?!
COULDN'T THEY AT LEAST HAVE FIGURED OUT WHO THAT GUY'S ALLIES WERE?
AFTER THAT, THE INSTRUCTORS AND MAGIC INVESTIGATORS CAME AND QUESTIONED PEOPLE.
IT WASN'T OVER UNTIL 10 PM, RIGHT? AND IT WAS STILL FRUITLESS?


WELL, WE KNOW WE RAN UP AGAINST SOME YAKO DEVOTEES.
BUT UNFORTUNATELY, WE DON'T KNOW WHO WAS BACKING THEM.

AND WHAT ABOUT KAKU-GYOKI?
IT SEEMS HIS MEMORIES WERE SEALED AWAY WITH A SPELL.
NOW THEY'RE TRYING TO UNDO IT AT THE ONMYO AGENCY.
I WONDER HOW MUCH THEY'LL FIGURE OUT...?

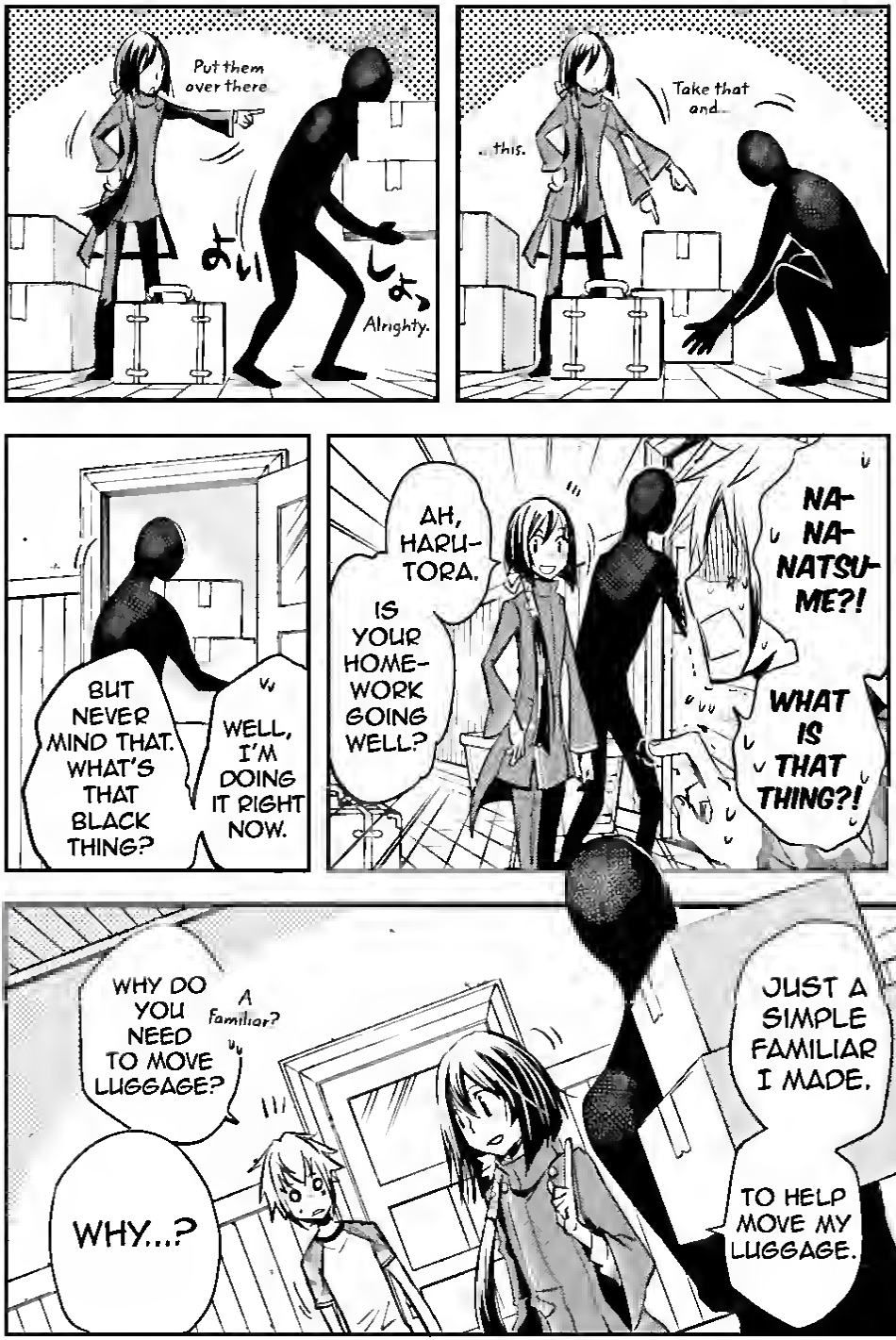

HE'S BEEN UNDER SOME KIND OF SUG-GESTIVE SPELL.
SO IT'S LIKE NATSUME SAID, HE WAS JUST DELU-SIONAL.
IT WAS DEFI-NITELY A FAKE.
AND OF COURSE HIS CLAIM TO BE HISHAMARU WAS AN OUTRIGHT LIE.

WELL, I SUPPOSE THAT'S ONLY NATURAL.
AT THE VERY LEAST...

BAM!
...
...THAT THING WAS COMPLETELY DIFFERENT...
...FROM THE OGRE I SAW.
?
MAN, THEY SURE ARE NOISY.
ISN'T THE ROOM NEXT-DOOR SUPPOSED TO BE EMPTY?
OH, ALSO.
INTER-ESTINGLY, BECAUSE OF THEIR SHAPES AND THE MATERI-ALS USED TO MAKE THEM.
...THEY DON'T THINK THE FAKE KAKU-GYOKI AND THE POISON WERE MADE BY THE SAME PER-SON.
SO YOU'RE SAYING THE GUY WHO MADE THE OGRE FAMILIAR WASN'T THE GUY WE SAW?
KOOK
KOOK
HMM? WHAT?
THUD
SOME-ONE?
ACCORD-ING TO THE TES-TIMONY, SOMEONE TRICKED HIM.
IT SEEMED THAT GUY BELIEVED IT WAS THE GEN-UINE KAKU-GYOKI.

FIDGET
OH, IT'S YOU, KON.
THANKS FOR THE TEA.
カチャ
CLACK
ちょこ
BLUSH
GLANCE
U-U-UMM...
HMM?
GLANCE
STARE
WHAT IS IT?
MASTER HARUTORA, THE TRUTH IS...

?!
CREEP
SNORT
TAP TAP TAP
WHOOSH
W-W-W-WHAT?!
NATSU-ME?


Put them over there.
よいしょ。
Alrighty.
Take that and...
...this.
BUT NEVER MIND THAT. WHAT'S THAT BLACK THING?
WELL, I'M DOING IT RIGHT NOW.
AH, HARUTORA. IS YOUR HOMEWORK GOING WELL?
NA-NA-NATSUME?!
WHAT IS THAT THING?!
WHY DO YOU NEED TO MOVE LUGGAGE?
A familiar?
WHY...?
JUST A SIMPLE FAMILIAR I MADE.
TO HELP MOVE MY LUGGAGE.

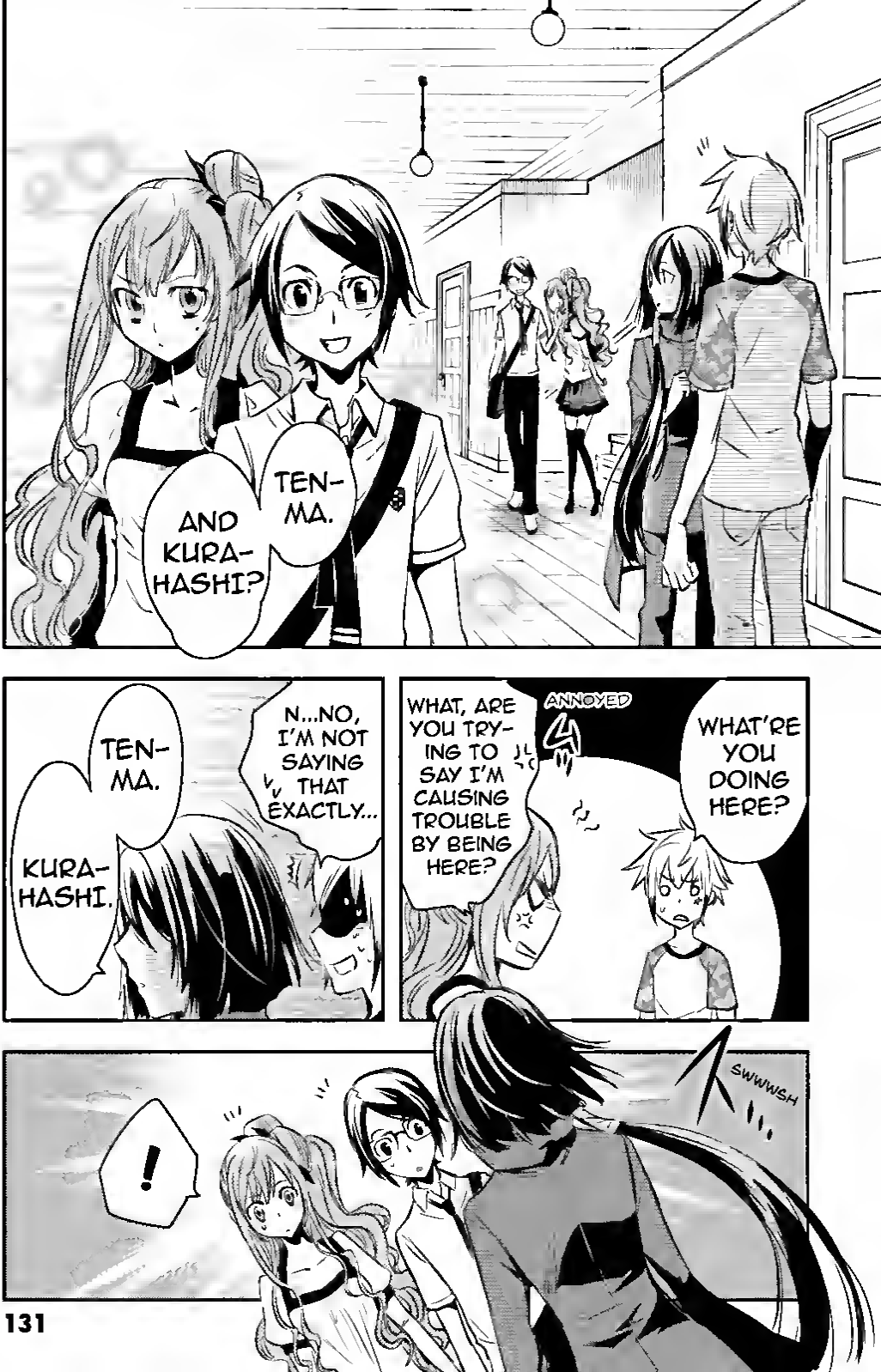
FROM TODAY ONWARD, I'M LIV-ING HERE.
THOMP!
I TOLD YOU BEFORE, RIGHT?
BUT THIS IS THE BOYS' DORM!
Huh?!
YOU'RE ...
... LIVING HERE?!
Hmph.
AND I AM A MALE STUDENT.

W... WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
ISN'T IT OBVI-OUS?
YOU DON'T GET IT, DO YOU, HARU-TORA?
YOU DIDN'T REALIZE ANY-THING DURING THAT INCIDENT BEFORE?
Umm...
?
?
Huh...?
NOW YOU REALIZE THE TYPE OF DANGERS THAT I FACE EVERY DAY, DON'T YOU?
...SO?
WHAT DO YOU MEAN, "SO"?
FUME
YOU'RE MY FAMILIAR, AREN'T YOU?

IT'S YOUR DUTY TO PROTECT ME.
TWENTY-FOUR HOURS A DAY!
...ISN'T HOKUTO YOUR STRONGEST FAMILIAR?
SHOULDN'T YOU BE FINE WITHOUT ME?
IF YOU NEED PROTECTING ...
... NO.
Ahem
... N...
HUH?
BUT YOU'RE THE ONE WHO SAID IT, HARUTORA.
QUIET

TO BE COURA-GEOUS ENOUGH TO DE-PEND ON YOU.
...IS HER VERSION OF FOLLOWING MY ADVICE HONESTLY.
IN A WAY...
I GUESS THIS...
BLUSH
... YEAH.
...IT'S KINDA CU--...
SHAKE
... HEY.
HOLD ON A SEC!
SHAKE
SHAKE

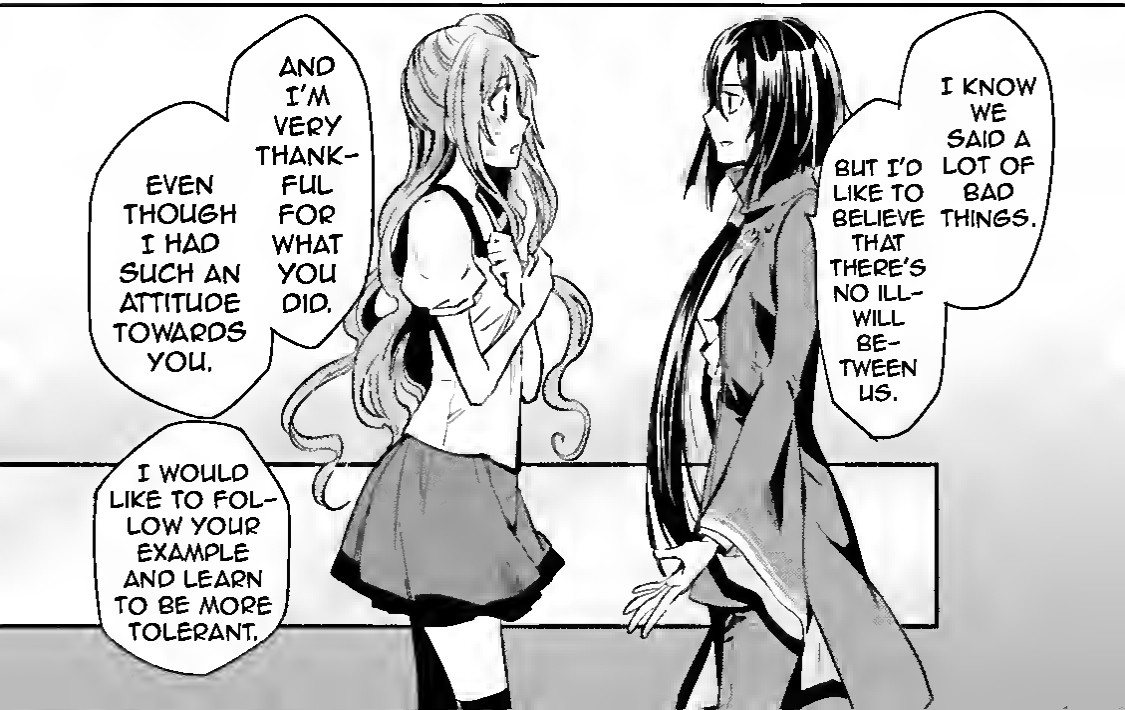
Pout
YOU TOLD ME TO DEPEND ON YOU, DIDN'T YOU?
I'M TELLING YOU, YOU CAN'T LIVE HERE. IT'S THE BOYS' DORM!
GIVE ME A HAND.
GIVE YOU A HAND?!
PANIC
UGH ...!
DRIP
DRIP
DRIP
STARE
HUH?
WHAT'RE YOU DOING, HARU-TORA?

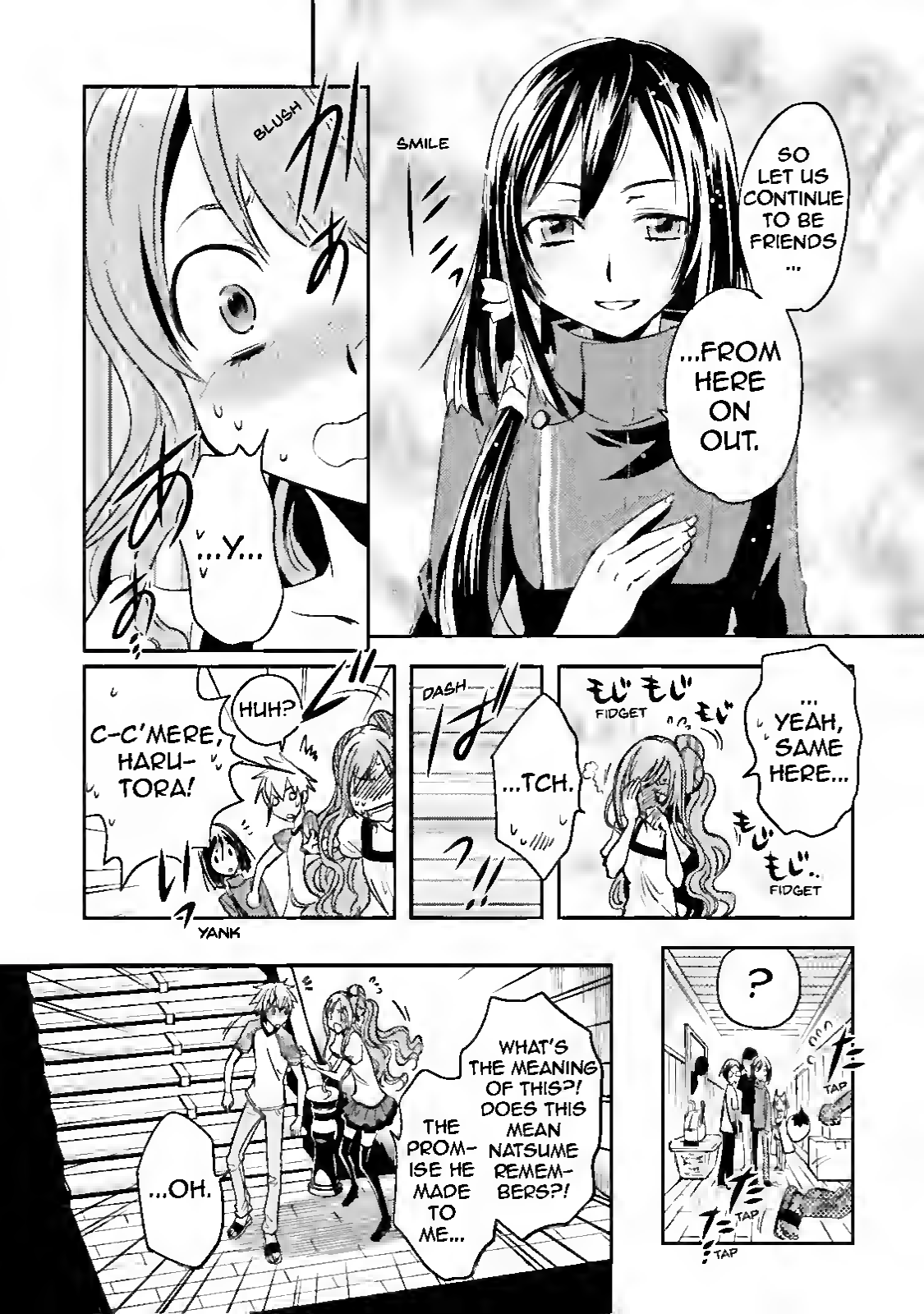

TEN-MA.
AND KURA-HASHI?
WHAT'RE YOU DOING HERE?
ANNOYED
WHAT, ARE YOU TRYING TO SAY I'M CAUSING TROUBLE BY BEING HERE?
N...NO, I'M NOT SAYING THAT EXACTLY...
TEN-MA.
KURA-HASHI.
SWWWSH
!

Flustered.
あわあわわ
OH... DON'T WORRY ABOUT THAT. I DIDN'T REALLY DO MUCH.
THAT'S NOT TRUE. I'M THANK-FUL FOR YOUR HELP.

YOU TOO, KURA-HASHI.
UH...
UM...
SURPRISE

えっ!?
Huh?!
BOW
THANKS FOR BEFORE.
I'M SORRY TO HAVE PUT YOU THROUGH SUCH TROUBLE.


I KNOW WE SAID A LOT OF BAD THINGS.
BUT I'D LIKE TO BELIEVE THAT THERE'S NO ILL-WILL BE-TWEEN US.
AND I'M VERY THANK-FUL FOR WHAT YOU DID.
EVEN THOUGH I HAD SUCH AN ATTITUDE TOWARDS YOU.
I WOULD LIKE TO FOL-LOW YOUR EXAMPLE AND LEARN TO BE MORE TOLERANT.


BLUSH
あ
あ
あ
...Y...
SMILE
SO LET US CONTINUE TO BE FRIENDS ...
...FROM HERE ON OUT.
C-C'MERE, HARU-TORA!
HUH?
YANK
DASH
...TCH.
もじもじ
FIDGET
もじ
...YEAH, SAME HERE...
もじもじ..
FIDGET
THE PROM-ISE HE MADE TO ME...
WHAT'S THE MEANING OF THIS?! DOES THIS MEAN NATSUME REMEM-BERS?!
...OH.
?
TAP
TAP
TAP

NO, I DON'T THINK SO...
THEN WHY IS THIS GOING ON ALL OF A SUDDEN ...?
HE ALREADY SAID WHY.
YOU HELPED SAVE HIM BACK THERE.
GASP
JUMP
BUT...
THERE ARE TIMES WHERE HE CERTAINLY IS ONLY THINKING OF HIMSELF AND THE TSUCHIMIKADO FAMILY, BUT...
...I THINK THAT MAY JUST BE AN UNCONSCIOUS SURVIVAL INSTINCT ON HIS PART.
AND SINCE HE THINKS OF US AS FRIENDS, HE'S JUST BEING CLEAR AND OPEN ABOUT IT.
FRIENDS...? I'M HIS FRIEND?
THUD
BUT I'M ALWAYS...
EVEN IF HE THINKS IT'S WEIRD THAT ACT OUT LIKE THAT ALL THE TIME...
...I'M PRETTY SURE HE DOESN'T HATE YOU, OKAY?
THOUGH HE PROBABLY DOES KNOW YOU'RE HARD TO DEAL WITH, ...
...

I GUESS I...
I...
WHAT?
...LOVE NATSUME AFTER ALL.
OH? WELL THAT'S GOOD TO--
キャ
TE-HEE!
Huh?!
WAIT, WHAT?!
は
あ!?
...BUT THIS IS ANOTHER CHANCE TO START OVER.
THOUGH IT'S SAD ABOUT THAT PROM-ISE...
...NOW I'M SURE OF MY FEEL-INGS...
WHEN YOU SAY YOU LOVE NATSU-ME...
...Y... YOU MEAN...

NATSUME'S TALENTED, COOL, AND SMART.
DAZED
AND AS A BONUS, HE'S INNOCENT AND VERY KIND.
...YOU'RE IN LOVE WITH NATSU-ME?!
BUT THEN WHY...?
IDIOT! DON'T SCREAM IT OUT LOUD!
I HELPED YOU OUT A LOT DURING THAT INCIDENT, SO BE SURE TO RETURN THE FAVOR.
TAP
OH, THAT'S RIGHT!
AND YOU...
AS THANKS FOR MY HELP...
YAP YAP YAP
WHAT'S WRONG WITH ME FALLING IN LOVE WITH HIM?
IT WAS LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT WHEN I WAS A KID SO I WON'T STAND FOR ANY COM-PLAINTS.
COM-PLAINTS, HUH...?

...YOU HAVE TO HELP ME AND NATSUME BECOME A COUPLE.
A CO.. COU-PLE?!
Y-YEAH. WHAT'S WRONG WITH THAT?!
YOU'LL HELP ME OUT, RIGHT?!
FLUSTERED
FLUSTERED
B... BUT...
I CAN'T EXACTLY RECOM-MEND YOU DATE HIM...
HUH? WHY?!
W...WELL, THERE'S A BUNCH OF CIRCUM-STANCES YOU NEED TO KNOW.
FLUSTERED
"CUS-TOMS" AND THE LIKE...
I CAN'T SAY THAT HE'S REALLY A 'SHE' EITHER...!!
FLASH
!

YOU'VE...
GRIN
I SEE.
SO THAT'S HOW IT IS.
?
A-HA!
?
TWINKLE
...FALLEN FOR ME, HAVEN'T YOU?
... HUH?
SORRY, BUT... I'VE ALREADY TOLD YOU HOW I FEEL.
I'LL DO WHATEVER IT TAKES TO GET YOUR HELP. OKAY ?
GRIN GRIN
NO, THAT'S NOT IT.
WAIT, YOU'VE GOT IT WRONG!!
(I mean, I did think you were pretty hot!!)
NOW THAT I THINK ABOUT IT, EVER SINCE YOU TRANSFERRED HERE...
...YOU'VE LOOKED AT ME WITH A STRANGE AMOUNT OF ENTHUSIASM.
I SEE.

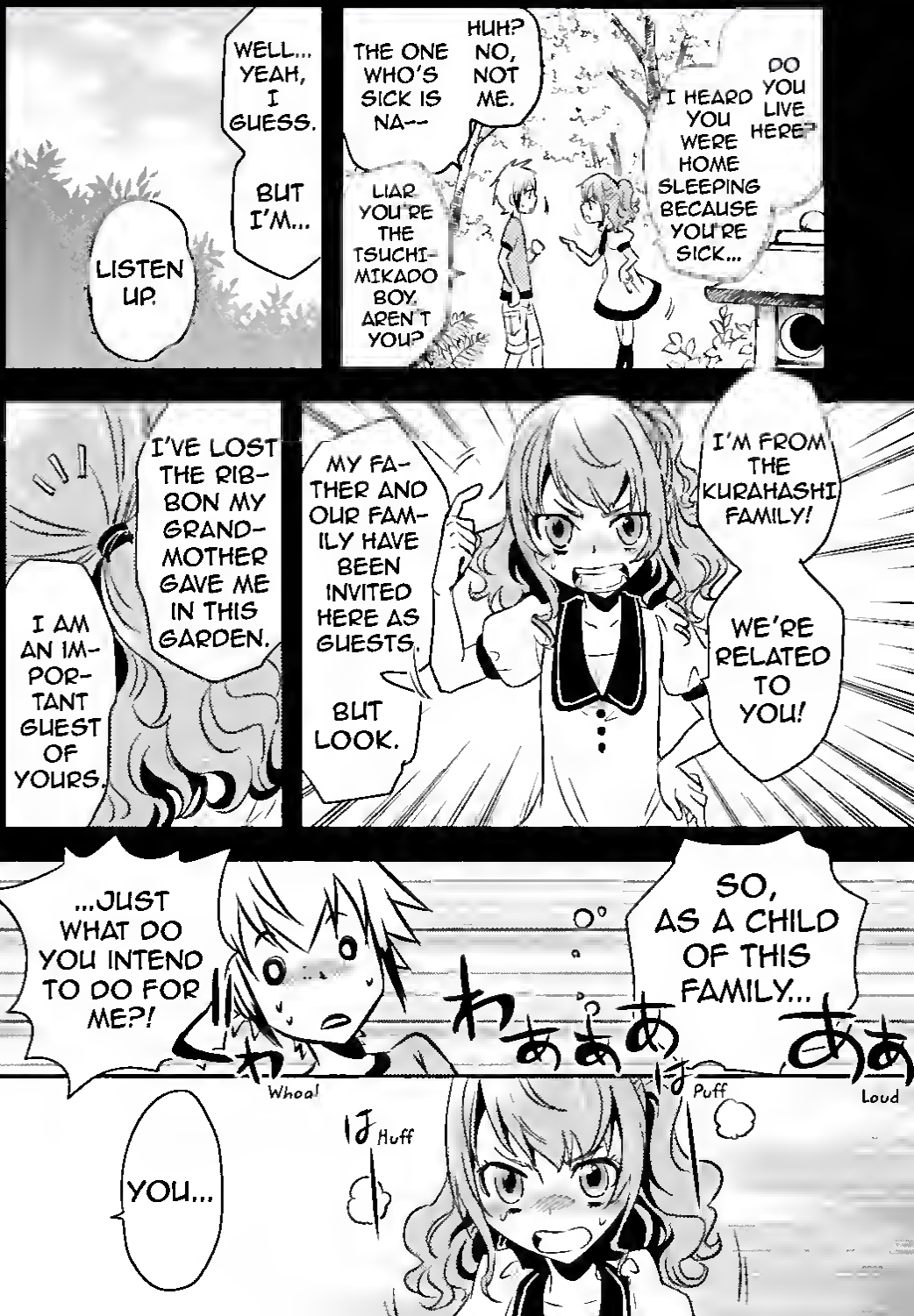
YOU PROMISE, RIGHT?
...HUH?
WHAT THE...?
I REMEMBER... ONCE...
SHOCK
HARU-TORA?

STARE
SHUDDER
UH...
NA-TSUME!
SORRY ABOUT LEAVING SO SUD-DENLY.
HARUTORA SAID HE WANTED TO TALK ABOUT SOMETHING IN PRIVATE.
LA LA LA
SORRY TO BOTHER YOU GUYS.
I DID ...?!
BUT WE'RE DONE.
SORRY FOR JUST DROP-PING IN LIKE THIS, BUT DO YOU MIND IF I HEAD BACK NOW?
...GO AHEAD.
SPARKLE
SPARKLE
SPARKLE
SPARKLE
HARU-TORA.
NA... NATSU-ME.
DON'T TELL ME YOU HEARD ALL OF THAT JUST NOW.
STARE

Argh!
OF COURSE SHE ONLY HEARD THAT PART!
IT'S NOT LIKE THAT, NATSU-ME!
HMPH!
I'M TELLING YOU--!
YOU'RE FREE TO "FALL" FOR WHOEVER YOU WANT.
BUT DON'T FORGET YOUR DUTIES.
じと～
STARE STARE
TAP TAP TAP
スタスタスタ
I DON'T REALLY CARE ABOUT IT AT ALL.
WHAT? BUT AREN'T YOU ACTING LIKE YOU CARE A LOT?!
I DON'T CARE A BIT WHAT IT'S LIKE.
IT DOESN'T MATTER TO ME EITHER WAY.
スタスタ
TAP TAP
Sigh
... HARUTORA, YOU REALLY DON'T KNOW WHEN TO SHUT UP, DO YOU?
HEY.
OOPS.

NA... NATSUME YOU'RE REVEALING YOUR TRUE COLORS.
YOU SEEM TO BE TAKING THIS QUITE LIGHTLY.
WELL, YOU WERE THE ONE EAVESDROPPING...
UM.. IT REALLY WAS JUST A MISUNDERSTANDING, OKAY?
YOU TOLD ME TO DEPEND ON YOU--THAT I COULD DEPEND ON YOU!
OH, COME ON!
IT REALLY IS JUST A BIG MISUNDERSTANDING...!
FLAP FLAP
HMM?
THE RIBBON?
Sob
Sob

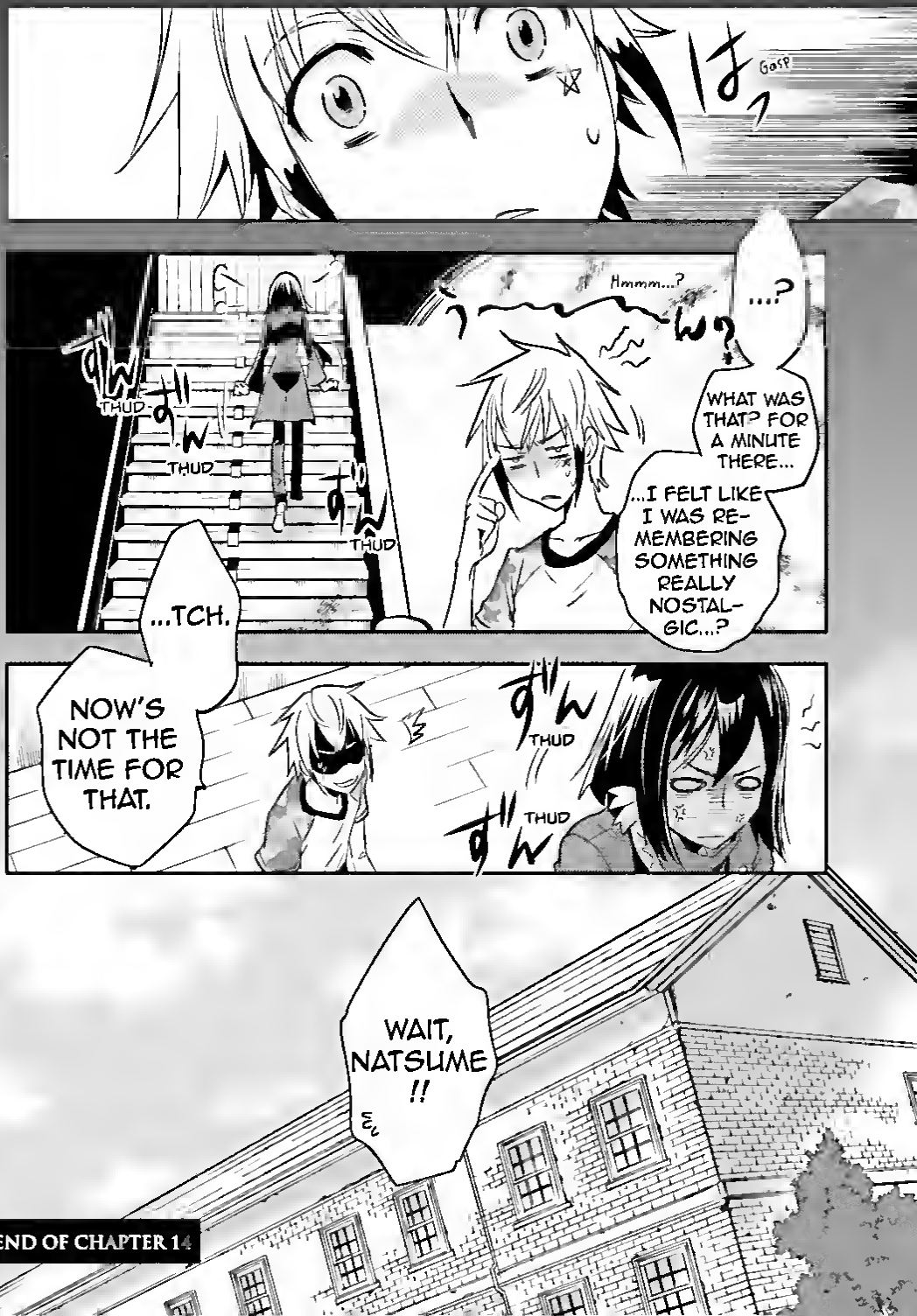
Sob
Hic
SOMEONE'S CRYING.
A GIRL.
Sob
Gasp
!
WHY IS SHE IN NATSUME'S GARDEN?
NOT NATSUME. A GIRL I DON'T KNOW.
...ARE YOU CRYING?
GLARE
BUT ...
RUB
RUB
RUB
RUB
O... OF COURSE I'M NOT CRYING!


WELL... YEAH, I GUESS.
BUT I'M...
LISTEN UP.
HUH? NO, NOT ME.
THE ONE WHO'S SICK IS NA--
LIAR YOU'RE THE TSUCHI-MIKADO BOY, AREN'T YOU?
I HEARD YOU WERE HOME SLEEPING BECAUSE YOU'RE SICK...
DO YOU LIVE HERE?
I'VE LOST THE RIB-BON MY GRAND-MOTHER GAVE ME IN THIS GARDEN.
I AM AN IM-POR-TANT GUEST OF YOURS.
MY FA-THER AND OUR FAM-ILY HAVE BEEN INVITED HERE AS GUESTS.
BUT LOOK.
I'M FROM THE KURAHASHI FAMILY!
WE'RE RELATED TO YOU!
...JUST WHAT DO YOU INTEND TO DO FOR ME?!
SO, AS A CHILD OF THIS FAMILY...
わぁぁぁぁぁ
Whoa!
Puff
Loud
Huff
YOU...

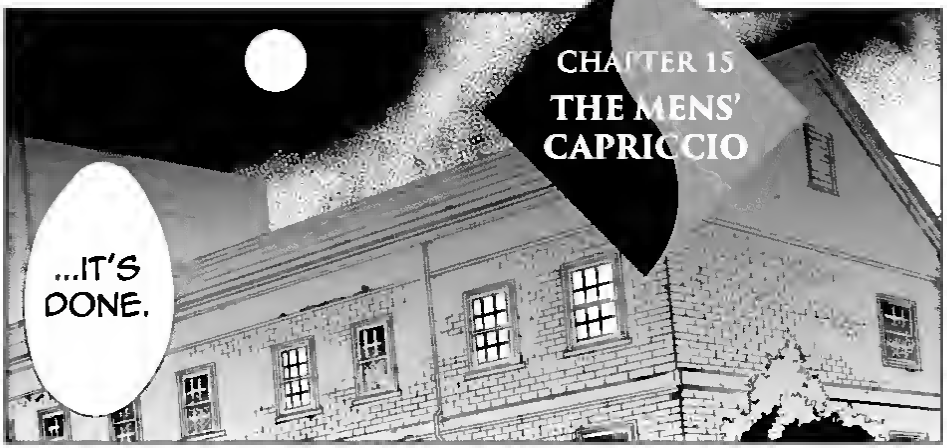
YOU LOOK SO CUTE.
BUT YOU ACT LIKE A GUY.
WHA--?!
Y...Y-YOU...
...LOST YOUR RIB-BON, HUH?
OKAY.
LET'S LOOK FOR IT, TO-GETHER.
WHAT?

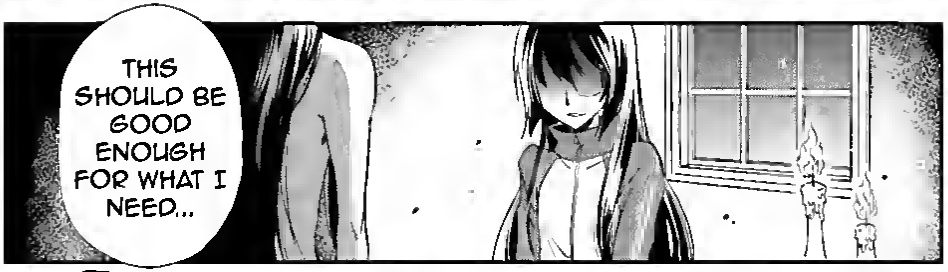
...LOOK FOR IT ON MY OWN.
...I'LL...
WHAT'RE YOU GOING TO DO?!
WE DIDN'T FIND IT, DID WE...?
REALLY?!
...YEAH. I'LL TRY MY BEST.
YOU'LL REALLY GO LOOKING FOR ME?
...DON'T FOR-GET, OKAY?
AL-RIGHT.
I'LL FOR-GIVE YOU, THEN.
BUT...

YOU PROMISE, RIGHT?
...SHE ALSO FORGOT TO TELL ME HER NAME.
BUT SHE LEFT LOOKING HAPPY.
THE GIRL... ...NEVER FOUND HER RIBBON.
I AM PART OF THE TSUCHIMIKADO FAMILY, BUT I'M NOT NATSUME...

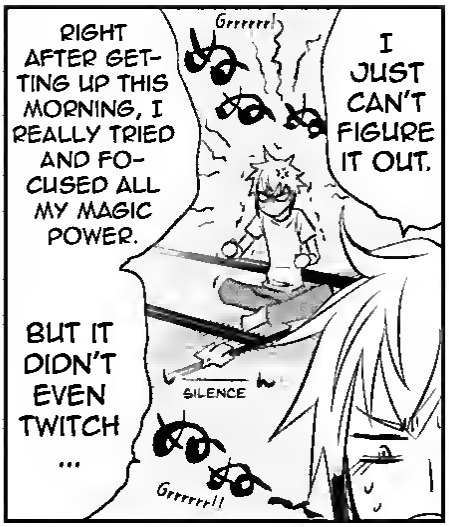

Gasp
Hmmm...?
...?
WHAT WAS THAT? FOR A MINUTE THERE...
...I FELT LIKE I WAS REMEMBERING SOMETHING REALLY NOSTALGIC...?
THUD
THUD
THUD
...TCH.
NOW'S NOT THE TIME FOR THAT.
THUD
THUD
WAIT, NATSUME!!
END OF CHAPTER 14

TOKYO
RAVENS

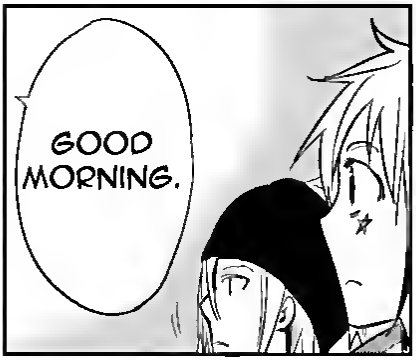

CHAPTER 15
THE MENS' CAPRICCIO
...IT'S DONE.

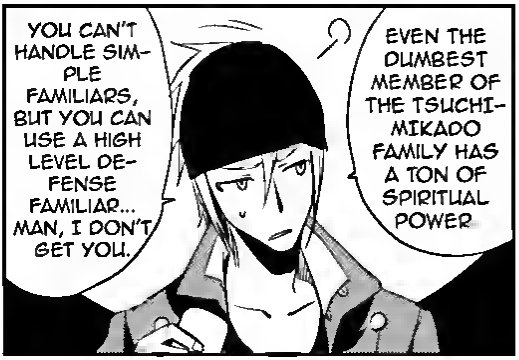

THIS SHOULD BE GOOD ENOUGH FOR WHAT I NEED...

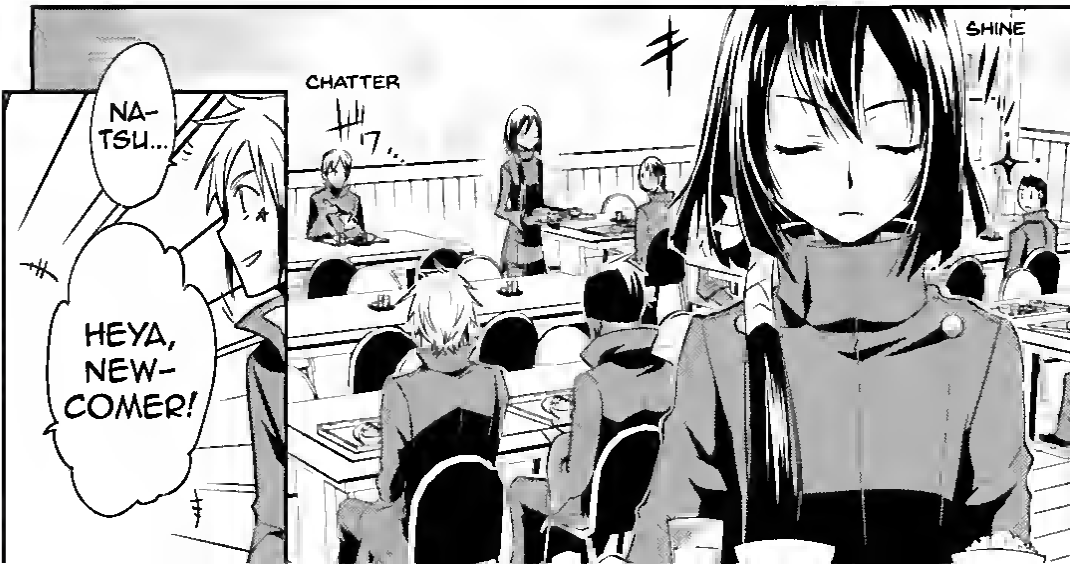
JUST YOU WATCH...!
SMIRK
CHATTER
CRAP, I'M TIRED...
CHATTER
ONMYO PREP SCHOOL-- BOYS' DORM CAFETERIA


I JUST CAN'T FIGURE IT OUT.
Grrrrrr!
RIGHT AFTER GETTING UP THIS MORNING, I REALLY TRIED AND FOCUSED ALL MY MAGIC POWER.
BUT IT DIDN'T EVEN TWITCH ...
SILENCE
Grrrrrr!!

MAN, MAKING SIMPLE FAMILIARS IS SUCH A PAIN!
Sigh.
OH, THAT HOMEWORK PROBLEM?
YOU WEREN'T CHANGING THE FORM FROM PAPER INTO ANYTHING ELSE, JUST GETTING IT TO MOVE, RIGHT?

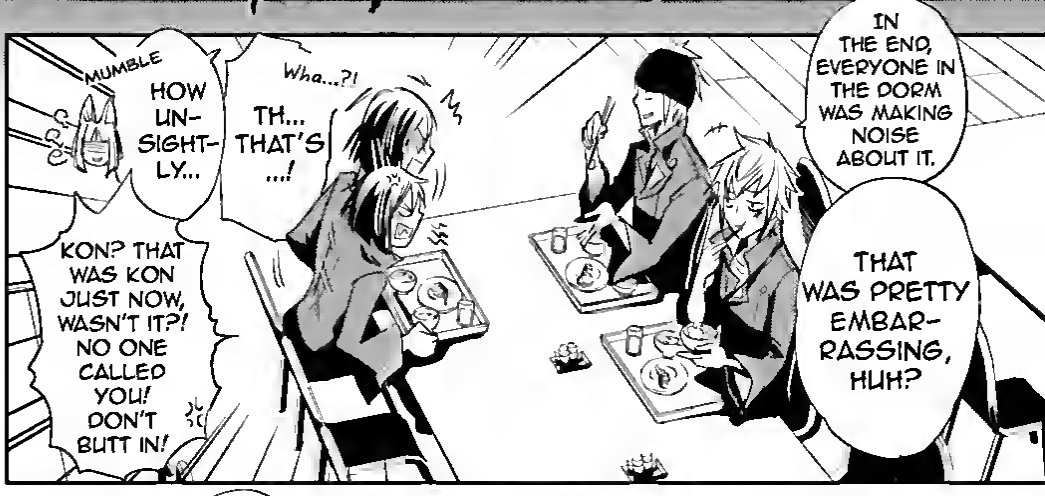

GOOD MORNING.


EVEN THE DUMBEST MEMBER OF THE TSUCHIMIKADO FAMILY HAS A TON OF SPIRITUAL POWER
YOU CAN'T HANDLE SIMPLE FAMILIARS, BUT YOU CAN USE A HIGH LEVEL DEFENSE FAMILIAR... MAN, I DON'T GET YOU.


SHINE
CHATTER
NA-TSU...
HEYA, NEWCOMER!

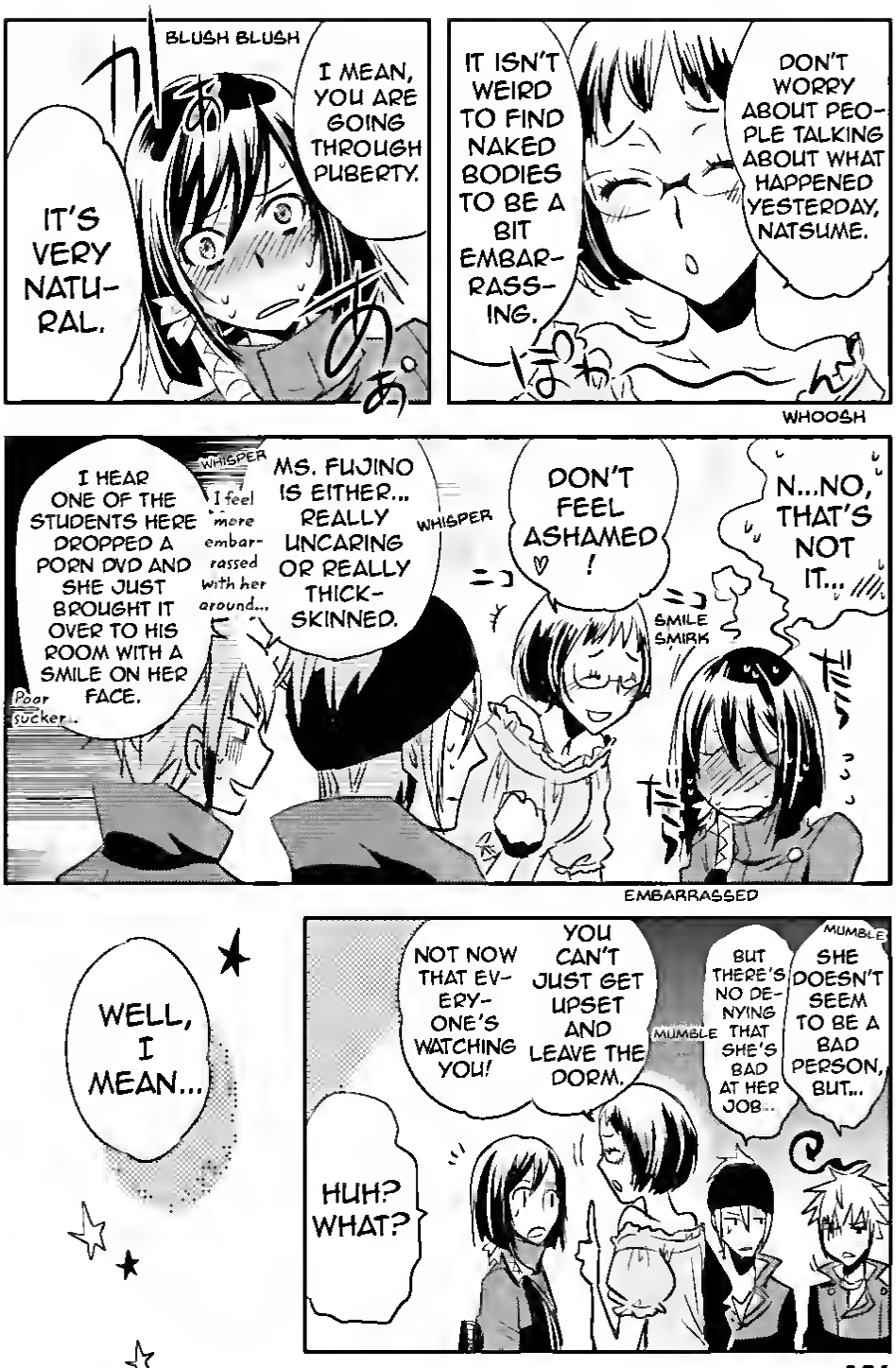
TWITCH
SO IT'S ONLY NATURAL FOR A "BEAUTY" LIKE HIM TO BE ON HIS GUARD.
THE BOYS' DORM IS FILLED WITH A BUNCH OF STARVING ANIMALS.
...I BEG YOUR PARDON...?
LAUGHTER
ははは
NATSUME'S SURPRISINGLY FUNNY LIKE THAT.
YOU SURPRISED ME, SCREAMING "KYAAAH!" SUDDENLY LIKE THAT.
YOU MUST'VE HAD A HARD DAY YESTERDAY.
IT LOOKS LIKE THE WHOLE DORM ALREADY KNOWS ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED YESTERDAY, NATSUME.
SHUT UP.
IT'S NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS.
WHAT HAPPENED YESTERDAY
SPLASH
Phew.
CHATTER
CHATTER
シャワー室
SHOWER ROOM

Kyaaah?!
DOOM
WHAT'S WRONG? WHAT'S THIS RACKET ABOUT?!
THUD THUD THUD
DON'T TOUCH MEEEE!!
NOOOOO !!
HE COL-LAPSED!
WHOA? WHAT HAP-PENED?
THUD THUD THUD


MUMBLE
HOW UN-SIGHT-LY...
Wha...?!
TH... THAT'S ...!
KON? THAT WAS KON JUST NOW, WASN'T IT?! NO ONE CALLED YOU! DON'T BUTT IN!
IN THE END, EVERYONE IN THE DORM WAS MAKING NOISE ABOUT IT.
THAT WAS PRETTY EMBAR-RASSING, HUH?

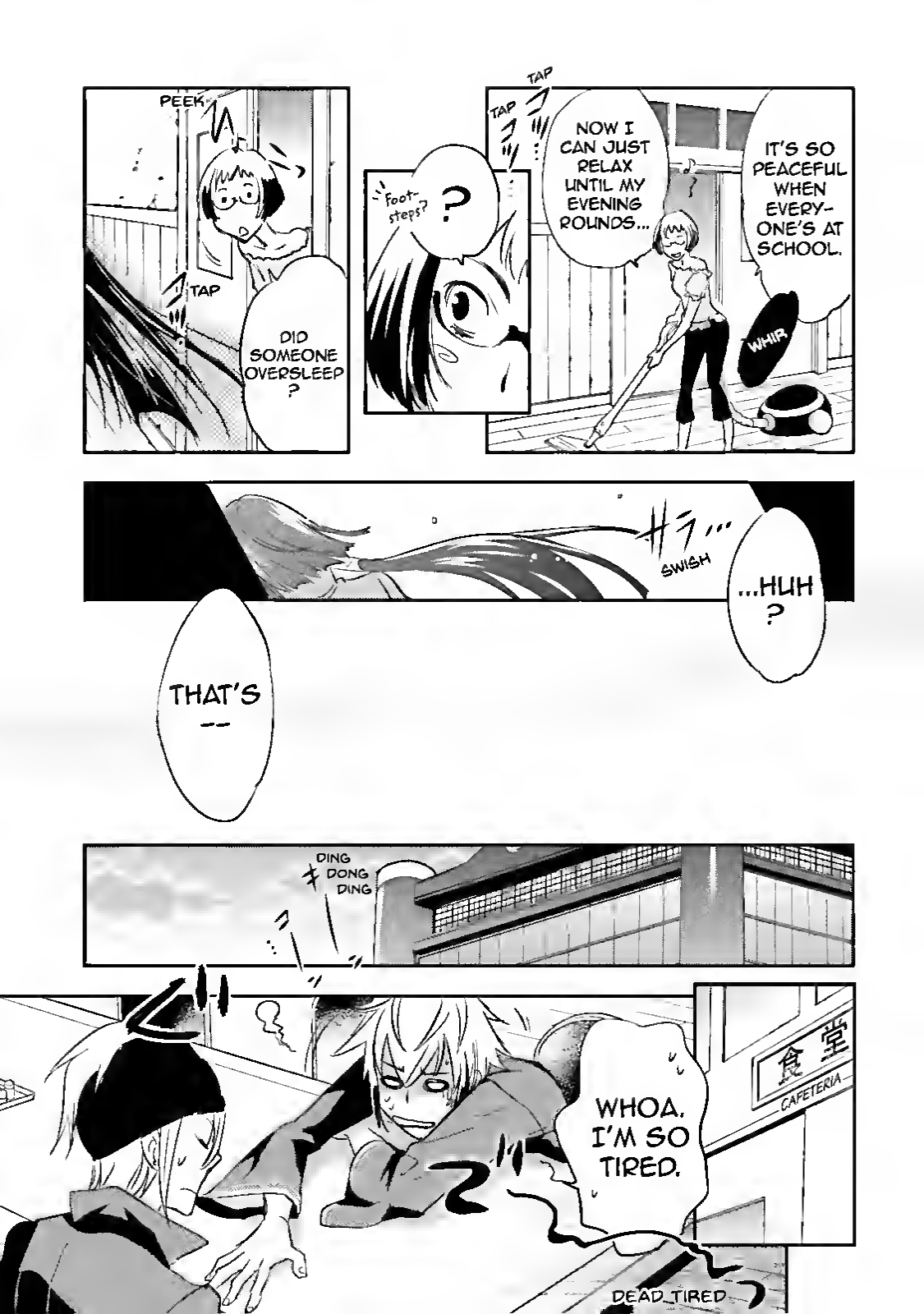
YEAH, BUT YOUR REACTION WAS A BIT CARELESS.

BUT THAT'S IMPORTANT, ISN'T IT?
THAT'S P-PRIVATE...
WHAT'RE YOU GOING TO DO ABOUT THE TOILET OR SHOWERING?
EVEN DISGUISING YOURSELF AS A GUY, IT'S RIDICULOUS TO TRY AND LIVE AT THE BOYS' DORM.
THIS ISN'T A LAUGHING MATTER. YOU'RE BEING RECKLESS.
GROAN
SO THAT'S THE SORRY STATE OF THINGS.
BLUSH
I-I'M NOT LOOKING! MY EYES ARE CLOSED!!
HUH? SO THAT MEANS YOU LOOK...
MUMBLE
I-I...USE INVISIBILITY MAGIC TO AVOID BEING SEEN...
NOT AFTER I JUST GOT YOU INTO THE DORM.
Oh my.
DON'T DO THAT, NATSUME.
YOU'D BE BETTER OFF GIVING UP AND GOING BACK TO YOUR OLD APARTMENT...
IF YOU CAN MAKE SIMPLE MISTAKES LIKE THIS, THIS ISN'T GOING TO WORK.
BOYS' DORM — DORM MOTHER MAKO FUJINO


BLUSH BLUSH
I MEAN, YOU ARE GOING THROUGH PUBERTY.
IT'S VERY NATURAL.
DON'T WORRY ABOUT PEOPLE TALKING ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED YESTERDAY, NATSUME.
IT ISN'T WEIRD TO FIND NAKED BODIES TO BE A BIT EMBARRASSING.
WHOOSH
I HEAR ONE OF THE STUDENTS HERE DROPPED A PORN DVD AND SHE JUST BROUGHT IT OVER TO HIS ROOM WITH A SMILE ON HER FACE.
Poor sucker...
WHISPER
I feel more embarrassed with her around...
MS. FUJINO IS EITHER... REALLY UNCARING OR REALLY THICK-SKINNED.
WHISPER
DON'T FEEL ASHAMED ♡!
SMILE SMIRK
N...NO, THAT'S NOT IT...
EMBARRASSED
WELL, I MEAN...
HUH? WHAT?
NOT NOW THAT EVERYONE'S WATCHING YOU!
YOU CAN'T JUST GET UPSET AND LEAVE THE DORM.
MUMBLE
BUT THERE'S NO DENYING THAT SHE'S BAD AT HER JOB...
MUMBLE
SHE DOESN'T SEEM TO BE A BAD PERSON, BUT...

AND HARUTORA WANTED TO FOLLOW AFTER YOU, A HALF-YEAR LATE TO JOIN THE SCHOOL.
Wait, Natsume!
Harutora?!
And besides...
YOU AND HARUTORA ARE CHILDHOOD FRIENDS FROM THE FAMOUS TSUCHIMIKADO FAMILY!
Te-hee!
HUH? WHAT?
YOU AND TOJI ARE BOTH VERY HANDSOME.
SO TOJI CAME ALONG, TOO, TO STAY TOGETHER WITH HARUTORA...
Hmph. I won't let you get between us!
Ha... Harutora is mine...!
AND NOW YOU'VE MOVED IN TO STAKE YOUR OWN CLAIM, NATSUME!
ISN'T THAT JUST WONDERFUL?
I'M ALL A-FLUTTER JUST THINKING ABOUT IT!
もわもわ
DAZED
ANYWAY, IF YOU HAVE ANY TROUBLES, JUST LET ME KNOW, OKAY?
THE FEMALE STUDENTS ARE ALL VERY INTERESTED, AS WELL!
Squee!
ME AND THE GIRLS' DORM MOTHER ARE SUPER EXCITED ABOUT IT!
SHE'S EVEN WAITING FOR MY 'FOLLOW-UP REPORT'!
WHA...?! JUST WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT...?!
W... WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT...?
わわっ
SHUDDER

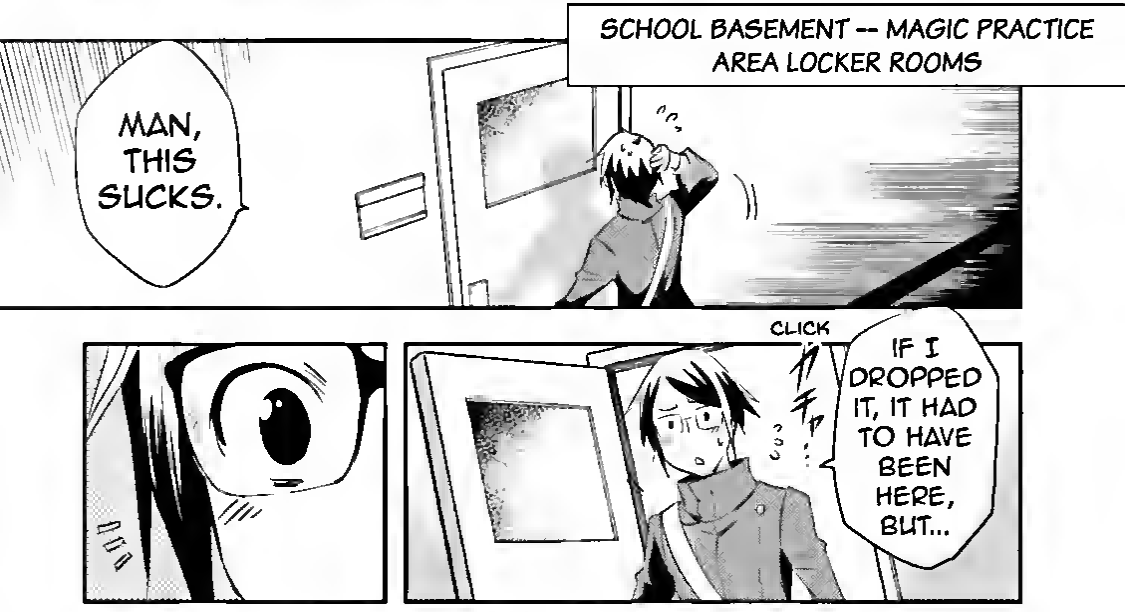
I AM ON YOUR SIDE, YOU THREE.
SPARKLE
SHE DOESN'T SEEM TO BE A BAD PERSON...
BUT THERE'S REALLY NO DENYING THAT SHE'S BAD AT HER JOB...
ANYWAY, BACK TO OUR DISCUSSION, NATSUME.
YOU REALLY CAN'T LIVE IN THE BOYS'...
NO NEED TO WORRY.
Hmph.
I'M ALREADY WORKING ON SOMETHING.
ザー
ザー
12
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11


PEEK
TAP
DID SOMEONE OVERSLEEP?
Foot-steps?
?
TAP
TAP
NOW I CAN JUST RELAX UNTIL MY EVENING ROUNDS...
IT'S SO PEACEFUL WHEN EVERY-ONE'S AT SCHOOL.
WHIR
SWISH
...HUH?
THAT'S --
DING DONG DING
食堂
CAFETERIA
WHOA. I'M SO TIRED.
DEAD_TIRED

I'M SUPER EXHAUSTED FROM TODAY'S HOME-WORK.
Uuugghh.
YOU CAN AT LEAST BE NICE TO ME IN THE DORM.
WELL.
DON'T YOU TWO LOOK UNDIS-CIPLINED.
Seething fury
YOU WERE TRYING SO HARD THAT THE SIMPLE FAMILIAR OF THE STUDENT NEXT TO YOU MOVED IN RESPONSE TO YOUR POWER.
Yeah
YOU USED ALL OF YOUR POWER TO TRY AND MOVE A SIMPLE FAMILIAR.
I'LL SEE YOU AT DINNER.
CHUCKLE
I SWEAR...
WELL, I'M HEADED BACK TO MY ROOM.
Umm
CAN WE JUST STOP TALKING ABOUT FAMILIARS FOR A BIT..?
THAT HAPPENED BECAUSE YOU WEREN'T CONCEN-TRATING ON ONE PARTICULAR DIRECTION
YOU REALLY NEED TO WORK ON CONTROLLING YOUR MAGIC POWER, HARUTORA.
ONE MINUTE LATER
IT'S GONE!

IT'S GONE!!
WHEN I WENT BACK TO MY ROOM...
...MY SIMPLE FAMILIAR'S EFFIGY WAS GONE...
NATSU-ME?
DIDN'T YOU HEAD BACK TO YOUR ROOM ...?
Huff
Puff
IF SOME-ONE SEES IT...!!
SOURCE
THIS IS BAD ...
THIS IS REALLY BAD.
TREMBLE
YOU MEAN THE ONE FROM OUR HOME-WORK?
IT WAS DEFINITELY THERE THIS MORNING ...
NO! MY HOMEMADE SIMPLE FAMILIAR, FROM YESTERDAY!
DIDN'T WE PASS EACH OTHER ON MY WAY OUT OF THE SCHOOL?
WHAT'RE YOU DOING HERE?
HUH? NATSU-ME.
WELL, IT WAS...
UH...
GULP
YOU SAID IT WAS HOMEMADE SO WHAT KIND OF FAMILIAR WAS IT?
HUH?
YOU DON'T THINK IT WAS STOLEN, DO YOU?

BANG
TAP TAP TAP TAP
Sigh
...I KNEW IT.
?
W... WHAT'S WITH HIM?
ZOOM!
ELSE?!
IT MUST'VE BEEN SOMEONE --
NATSUME'S GONNA HAVE SOME TROUBLE TO DEAL WITH.
WE SHOULD HEAD BACK TO THE SCHOOL, TOO.


SCHOOL BASEMENT -- MAGIC PRACTICE AREA LOCKER ROOMS
MAN, THIS SUCKS.
CLICK
IF I DROPPED IT, IT HAD TO HAVE BEEN HERE, BUT...

HUH? NATSUME?
WHAT'S WRONG?
How unusual
DID YOU FORGET SOMETHING HERE TOO, NATSUME?
NO.
HUH? UH, YOU DIDN'T?
OH, SO ARE YOU WAITING FOR SOMEONE?
NO.
YES.
TH...THEN YOU'RE DOING INDEPENDENT STUDY?
NO.
...?
CLACK
OH!
THERE IT IS!
GREAT! I FOUND MY WALLET, NATSUME!
YES.
...?
NATSUME, IS SOMETHING THE MATTER?
IF YOU NEED HELP, YOU CAN ALWAYS ASK ME FOR ADVICE, IF YOU WANT.
HMM?

A BATH TOWEL?
And a change of clothes?
YES.
Oh.
OH. YOU CAME TO THE LOCKER ROOMS FOR A SHOWER, NATSUME?
TWITCH
HUH?
STAND
UNZIP
RUSTLE
HUH?! NATSU-ME?!
SNAP
WHAT'S COME OVER YOU ALL OF A SUDDEN?
TWIRL

KA-THUMP
...BUT THEN WHY AM I SO FLUS-TERED?
I MEAN, YOU ARE A GUY LIKE ME.
KA-THUMP
AHA..
AHAHA...
KA-THUMP
I- I MEAN, I GUESS THIS IS A LOCKER ROOM, BUT WHY THE SUDDEN...
W...WELL, I GUESS IF YOU WANT TO TAKE A SHOWER, YOU HAVE TO TAKE YOUR CLOTHES OFF.. THAT IS NORMAL.
BLUSH
SNAP
I MEAN, HE'S BEAUTIFUL. BUT NATSUME IS A GUY.
SU-DDU
KA-IDZA
I WANT TO TURN AROUND AND LOOK!
BUT WAIT, I CAN'T!
KA-THUMP
HE'S A GUY...!!
WAIT A SEC. WHY AM I HAVING THOUGHTS LIKE THIS?
NA... NATSU-ME!!!
KA-THUMP

Phew...
VSSSHHH...
SHOWER ROOM
CLICK
I'M GOING TO HEAD OU--
SIGH
... WAIT, WHAT?
WAS I REALLY GOING TO...?
NO... I MEAN...
JUST FORGET IT.
IT WAS MY IMAGI-NATION.
WOBBLE
A TRICK OF MY IMAGI-NATION.
MY GRANDMA SURE IS SOME-THING.
PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE
...MAN.

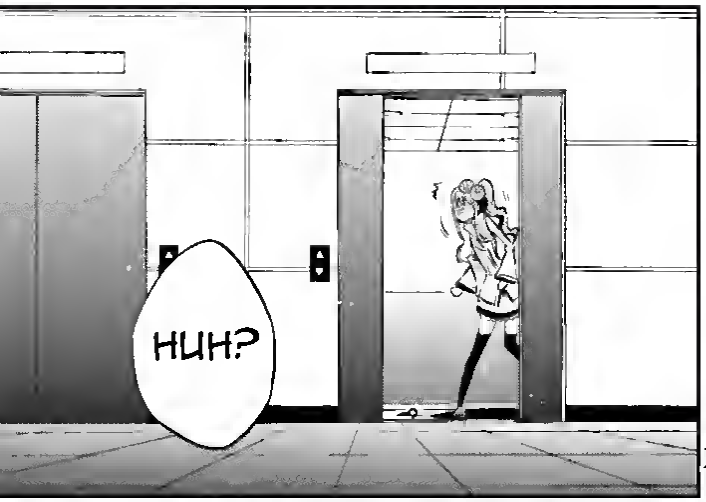
WHOOSH
!
TIME TO HEAD HOME...
DING!
CALLING ME TO THE PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE JUST TO GIVE ME A PRESENT FROM HER TRIP TO THE HOT SPRINGS.
AH, NATSU-ME?!
GLOW
OH, THAT'S RIGHT. DO YOU LIKE BEAN CAKES, NATSU-ME?
YES.
YOU'RE STILL HERE! WERE YOU DOING SOME INDEPEN-DENT STUDY?
NO.
SO IT WAS SOME SECRET TRAINING OR SOME-THING?
N--
SO ARE YOU FREE RIGHT NOW?
N--
SO, WHY DON'T WE GO HAVE A LIGHT SNACK AND SOME TEA? JUST A LITTLE BIT? HOW ABOUT IT?

...BUT SINCE IT LET ME RUN INTO YOU, IT ISN'T ALL BAD.
CLENCH
THEN WHY DON'T WE SPLIT THIS?
MY GRAND-MA IS LONG-WINDED...
ONSEN
CLICK
I CAN'T.
...UH.
YES.
A BATH TOWEL?
GLANCE
GLANCE
I'VE HEARD THE SHOWERS IN THE DORMS ARE KINDA BROKEN DOWN.
I GOTTA TAKE THIS NICE AND EASY...
FLASH
DOES THAT MEAN HE CAME HERE TO TAKE A SHOWER?
HE'S GOT A SET OF SWEATS AND A BATH TOWEL...?

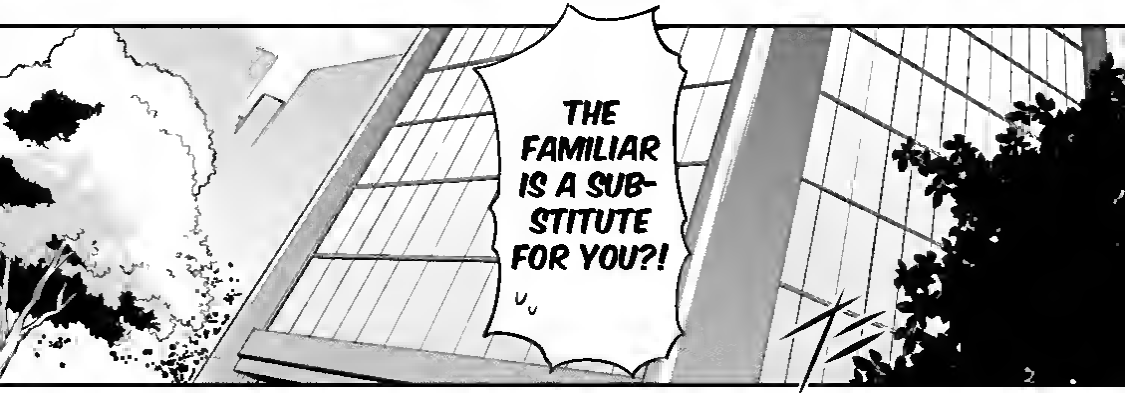
OH, I GOT IT!
S-SAY, NATSUME, YOU EVER GO TO HOT SPRINGS?
NO.
HMM... WELL YOU'VE GOTTA WANT TO GO TO ONE, RIGHT. THEY'RE HOT SPRINGS!
YES.
S... S-S-SO...
...I-I... IF YOU'D LIKE...
BLUSH BLUSH
...W-W-W-WHY DON'T WE GO TOGETHER SOME-TIME?
THERE ARE OPEN-AIR SPRINGS WHERE YOU CAN GET IN THE WATER...
FLINCH
NATSUME'S SUPER, SUPER SERIOUS. SO HE MIGHT REFUSE.
BUT IF I INVITE HARUTORA AND THE OTHERS...
...HE JUST MIGHT SAY OK...!!
CLENCH

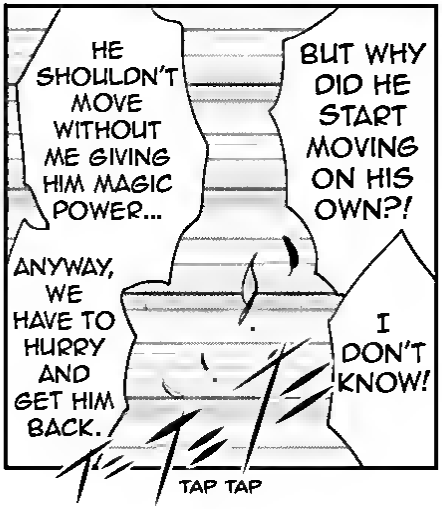
CLENCH
THERE'S DEFINITELY A CHANCE!
AND IF THERE ISN'T, I'LL MAKE ONE!!
OH, NATSUME IN A YUKATA...!!
AND THEN I'LL HAVE JUST COME OUT OF THE WATER, WITH MY HAIR DAMP, AND WITH SUPER SMOOTH SKIN...!!
しん… SILENCE
…
チラ GLANCE
…?
もわもわ DAZED
AND WE'D GO FROM BEING FRIENDS TO A HALF STEP BEYOND THAT...
...WE K-KISS AND STUFF!!
もわ DAZED
...GRADUALLY MOVING FORWARD UNTIL...
… MMH!!

RUSTLE, RUSTLE
ぬぎぎ
?!
NA... NATSU-ME?! WHAT'RE YOU...
あ
SNAP
BLUSH あーあ
WHAT'RE YOU DOING?! AND SO SUDDENLY ...?!
STARE
WHY IS THIS OLD GIRLS' MANGA TROPE HAPPENING RIGHT NOW...?!
WH... WHOOOA ...!
N...
NO. NATSUME, YOU CAN'T DO THIS.
AT LEAST LET'S DO THIS SOMEWHERE ELSE...
WHIRL
AH, BUT OF COURSE I'M STILL NERVOUS !!

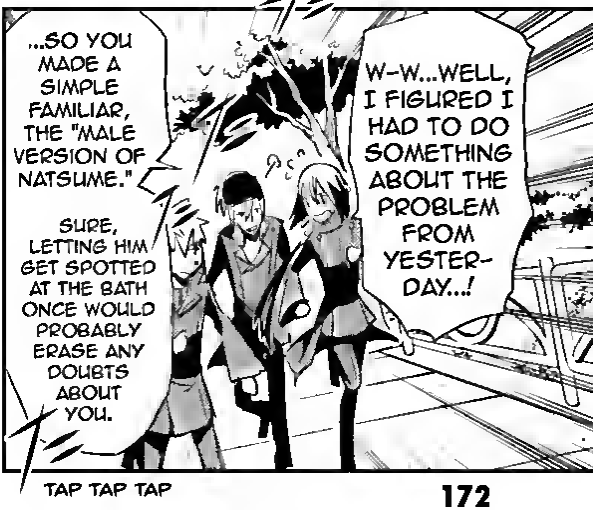


WHOOSH




HE SHOULDN'T MOVE WITHOUT ME GIVING HIM MAGIC POWER...
BUT WHY DID HE START MOVING ON HIS OWN?!
ANYWAY, WE HAVE TO HURRY AND GET HIM BACK.
I DON'T KNOW!

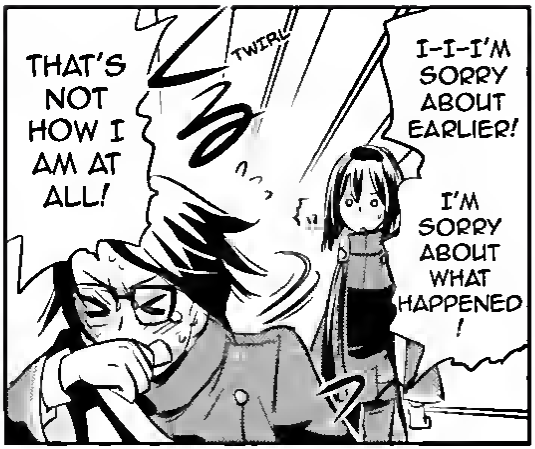
TAP TAP


...SO YOU MADE A SIMPLE FAMILIAR, THE "MALE VERSION OF NATSUME."
SURE, LETTING HIM GET SPOTTED AT THE BATH ONCE WOULD PROBABLY ERASE ANY DOUBTS ABOUT YOU.
W-W...WELL, I FIGURED I HAD TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT THE PROBLEM FROM YESTER-DAY...!

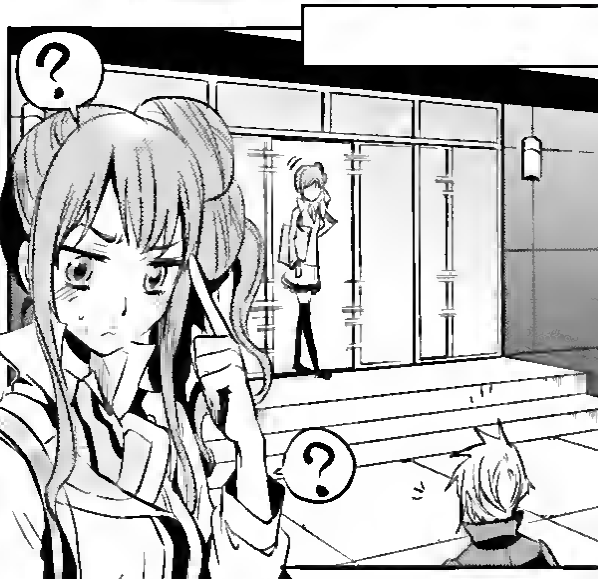
TAP TAP TAP

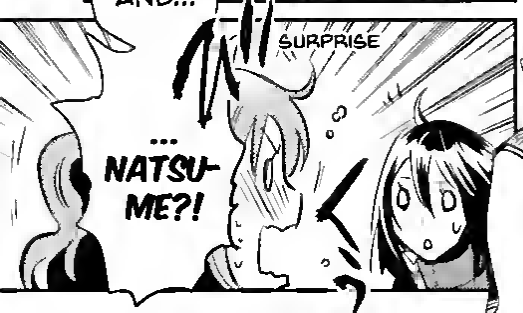
I MADE HIM SO THAT I COULD MOVE HIM VIA REMOTE CONTROL.
WITHOUT THE CONTROLS, HE SHOULD ONLY BE ABLE TO MAKE SIMPLE REPLIES LIKE "YES" AND "NO," BUT THERE'S NO TELLING WHAT CRAZY STUFF HE'LL DO.
IF HE GOES BERSERK LOOKING LIKE ME, IT'LL RUIN THE TSUCHI-MIKADO FAMILY NAME...
TAP TAP TAP TAP
CAN YOU NOT SENSE WHERE HE IS?
THE FfamiliAR IS MOVING AROUND WITHOUT ANY OF MY MAGIC POWER.
SO I CAN'T FOLLOW THE MAGIC SIGNA-TURE OR ANY-THING!
WOBBLE
HMM?
DAZE
HEY, TEN-MA!
You on your way back?
Yeah..
HARU-TORA... AND...
...
NATSU-ME?!
SURPRISE

I SWEA-AAAR ...!
DASH!
?
What was that about?

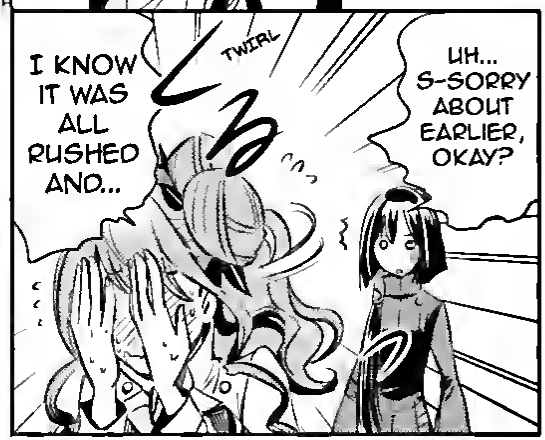

I-I-I'M SORRY ABOUT EARLIER!
TWIRL
THAT'S NOT HOW I AM AT ALL!
I'M SORRY ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED!

...HUH? OH.
HUH? KURA-HASHI?
Oh, you're still here?

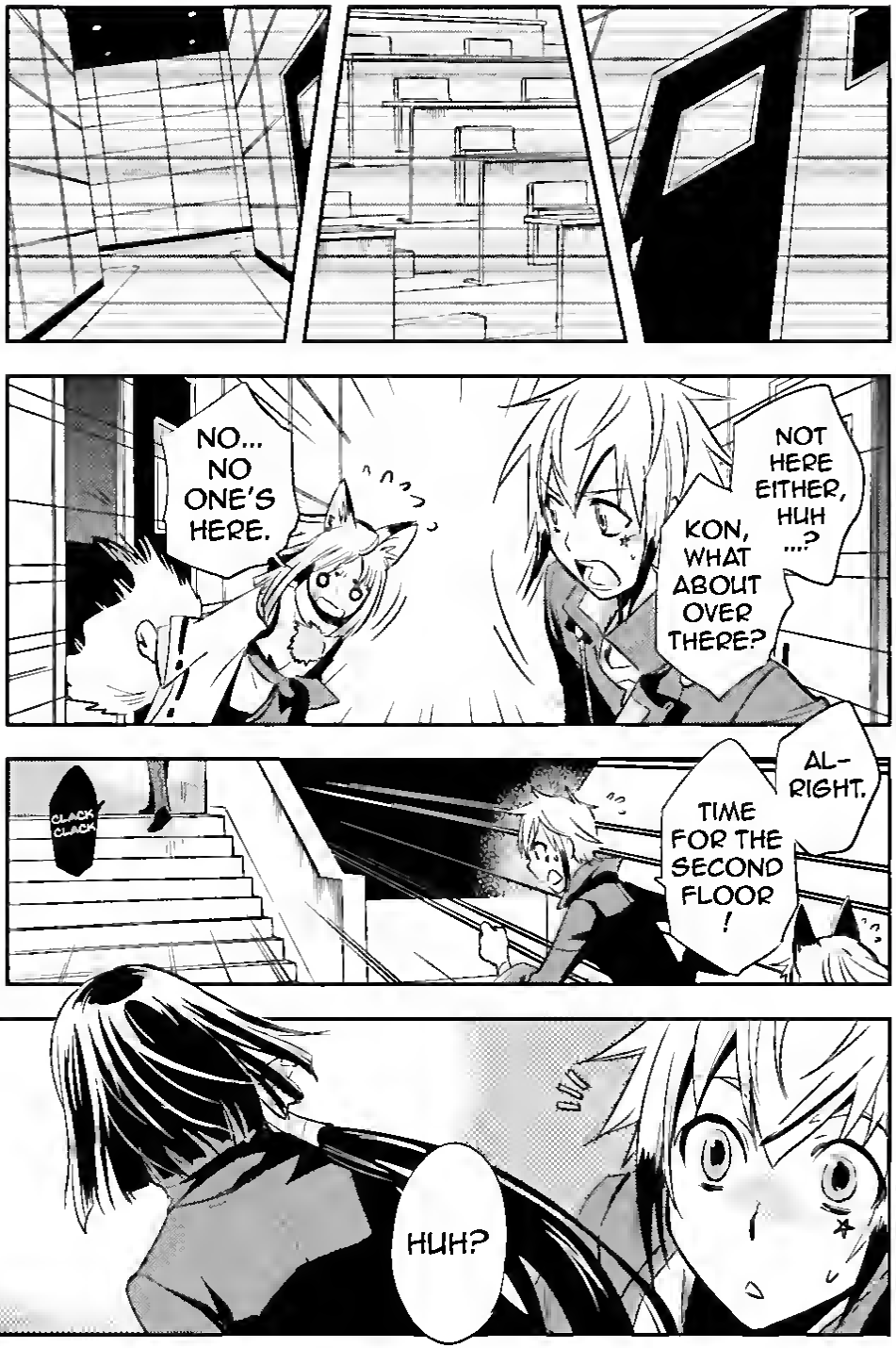

?
?


HARU-TORA... AND...
SURPRISE
... NATSU-ME?!

?
?
DASH
...I'LL JUST INVITE YOU SOME OTHER TIME, OKAY?
LATER ...!


I KNOW IT WAS ALL RUSHED AND...
TWIRL
UH... S-SORRY ABOUT EARLIER, OKAY?

GLOOM
!!
...THEY RAN INTO NATSU-ME'S SIMPLE FAMILIAR?
SHOCK
WAIT, DO YOU THINK...
What was with those two?
I'LL TAKE THE BASE-MENT.
HARU-TORA, YOU GO FROM THE FIRST FLOOR UPWARD.
TOJI, YOU GO FROM THE TOP FLOOR DOWNWARD!
IF YOU FIND HIM, GRAB HIM! OKAY?
GOT IT!
GRAB
U-U-UNDER-STOOD!
KON! YOU HELP, TOO!


NO... NO ONE'S HERE.
NOT HERE EITHER, HUH ...?
KON, WHAT ABOUT OVER THERE?
CLACK CLACK
AL-RIGHT.
TIME FOR THE SECOND FLOOR!
HUH?

NATSU-ME?!
THAT WAS FAST. YOU FINISHED COVERING THE BASEMENT?
NO.
HUH?
WELL, IF THAT'S THE CASE...
AH
NO.
AHH!!
SO YOU'RE THE SIMPLE FAMILIAR?!
WAIT, SO YOU'RE THE REAL NATSU-ME?
JUMP
STARE
M-M-MASTER HARU-TORA!!
THIS ONE IS NOT NATSUME.
IT'S THE FAMILIAR!!

BUT IT LOOKS SO MUCH LIKE HER. I'M SURPRISED.
HUH? BUT HE JUST SAID...
WASN'T IT MADE SO IT CAN ONLY ANSWER THAT WAY?
OH, THAT'S RIGHT... IT'S CAMOU-FLAGING ITSELF.
?!
むむ
Mmmh?!
YES.
BLUNT
ANYWAY, WE GOTTA GET IT SOMEWHERE WHERE OTHER PEOPLE WON'T SEE.
...I WONDER IF IT'LL LISTEN TO ME.
I mean, it is a simple familiar made of paper, it shouldn't be hard.
SURPRISE
...WHA ?!
SWISH....
Sniff sniff
Sniff sniff
SWISH

THAT THING...IT HAS A TRACE OF YOUR MAGIC POWER, MASTER HARUTORA!
SO THAT MEANS IT'S... YOUR FAMILIAR?!
DOOM
HUH? WHAT'RE YOU SAYING ...?
W-W-WHAT I MEAN IS...
THE THING THAT'S MAKING THIS FAMILIAR MOVE IS YOUR MAGIC POWER!
WHAT?! BUT DIDN'T NATSUME MAKE IT? WHY ...?
OR MAYBE... WHEN IT WAS DOING THAT STUFF THIS MORNING ...
GOING PALE
...OH ...
...TRYING TO MAKE THE SIMPLE FAMILIAR FROM THE HOMEWORK MOVE, WEREN'T YOU LETTING OUT A TON OF MAGIC POWER?
GRRR
WAIT, DOES THAT MEAN THAT THING WAS IN THE ROOM NEXT TO MINE?!
...I FEAR THAT IS THE CASE.
WAIT, SO THAT MEANS ...
...I'M THE CAUSE BEHIND ALL OF THIS?!
Not good...
ANYWAY, LET ME SEND THOSE TWO A MES-SAGE...
CLICK
CLICK
ALRIGHT. NOW, YOU...

COME WITH ME.
YES.
SWWWSH
Huh...?!
...
...A GUY, RIGHT ...?
KER-THUMP
THUMP
YOU'RE ...
GLANCE
M-M-MASTER HARUTORA, WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!
Hmm...
...IT SURE IS OBEDIENT...
IT'S A NICE CHANGE OF PACE FOR SOMEONE WITH NATSUME'S FACE.
I DON'T REALLY SEE THE DIFFERENCE...
BUT TAKING A BATH WITH THIS THING...
SPIN
TAP
TAP
...FOR SOME REASON, MAKES ME KINDA NERVOUS.
HUH?!
NO, I WAS JOKING. JUST A JOKE...

...HEY, WAIT A SEC!
UNDRESSING
UNDRESSING
WHAT THE HECK IS GOING ON?!
IT'S BEING CONTROLLED AUTOMATICALLY VIA MAGIC!!
SO IT'S BECAUSE I MENTIONED "BATH"? BUT HOW DO I STOP IT?!
I'M AFRAID THAT SINCE IT IS IN THE MIDDLE OF AN ACTION...
YOU MEAN I CAN'T STOP IT FROM GETTING NAKED...?!
FLUSTERED
THUD
IF A PERSON SEES IT DOING THAT...!!
ANYWAY, LET'S GET IT TO AN EMPTY CLASSROOM...!
DON'T YOU GET ALL CRAZY ON ME..!
ARE YOU REALLY SURE?
Huh?
THUD

YOU'RE NOT JUST MAKING THIS UP, FUJINO?
I'M COMPLETELY SERIOUS
RIGHT NOW, THERE IS A DAZZLINGLY REAL FANTASY UNFOLDING IN THE DORM.
I CAN'T PULL MY EYES AWAY FROM IT!
...UH...
BOOM!
TREMBLE
...N...
NO, THIS ISN'T WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE!

Oh-hoh!
AND DREAM ...!!
IT'S A REAL LIFE FANTASY ...!!
B...BUT OCCASIONALLY A LITTLE FORCING IS NECESSARY, RIGHT?!
AH, THAT'S YOUTH FOR YOU!
Oh, man!
THIS IS SO BAD. HARUTORA FORCING HIMSELF ON NATSUME.
HUH? I'M ALWAYS READY TO TAKE PICTURES OF THIS!
IS THIS REALLY THE TIME TO PULL OUT YOUR CAMERAS AND TAKE PICTURES?!
NICE TO MEET YOU, MS. KIFU! BUT MAYBE YOU SHOULD STOP TAKING A BUNCH OF PICTURES OF ME BEFORE POLITELY INTRODUCING YOURSELF!!
AND DELETE THOSE PICTURES, WHILE YOU'RE AT IT!!
NICE TO MEET YOU, HARUTORA. I'M THE DORM MOTHER FOR THE GIRLS' DORM, AKO KIFU. I'VE HEARD LOTS OF RUMORS ABOUT YOU. AND THERE'S PLENTY LEFT TO BE TOLD, I SEE.
WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU SAYING?!
FLASH
FLASH
FLASH
FLASH
FLASH
MAN, WHY'S IT SO NOISY OVER HERE?
SOMETHING THE MATTER? DID SOMETHING HAPPEN--

A REAL-LIFE ROMANCE NOVEL ...!!
HEY, YOU GUYS!!
Aaahh!
WAIT A SEC!!
THE FOLLOWING MORNING
CAFETERIA
食堂
...G...
CHATTER
CHATTER
CHIRP CHIRP CHIRP
チチチ...

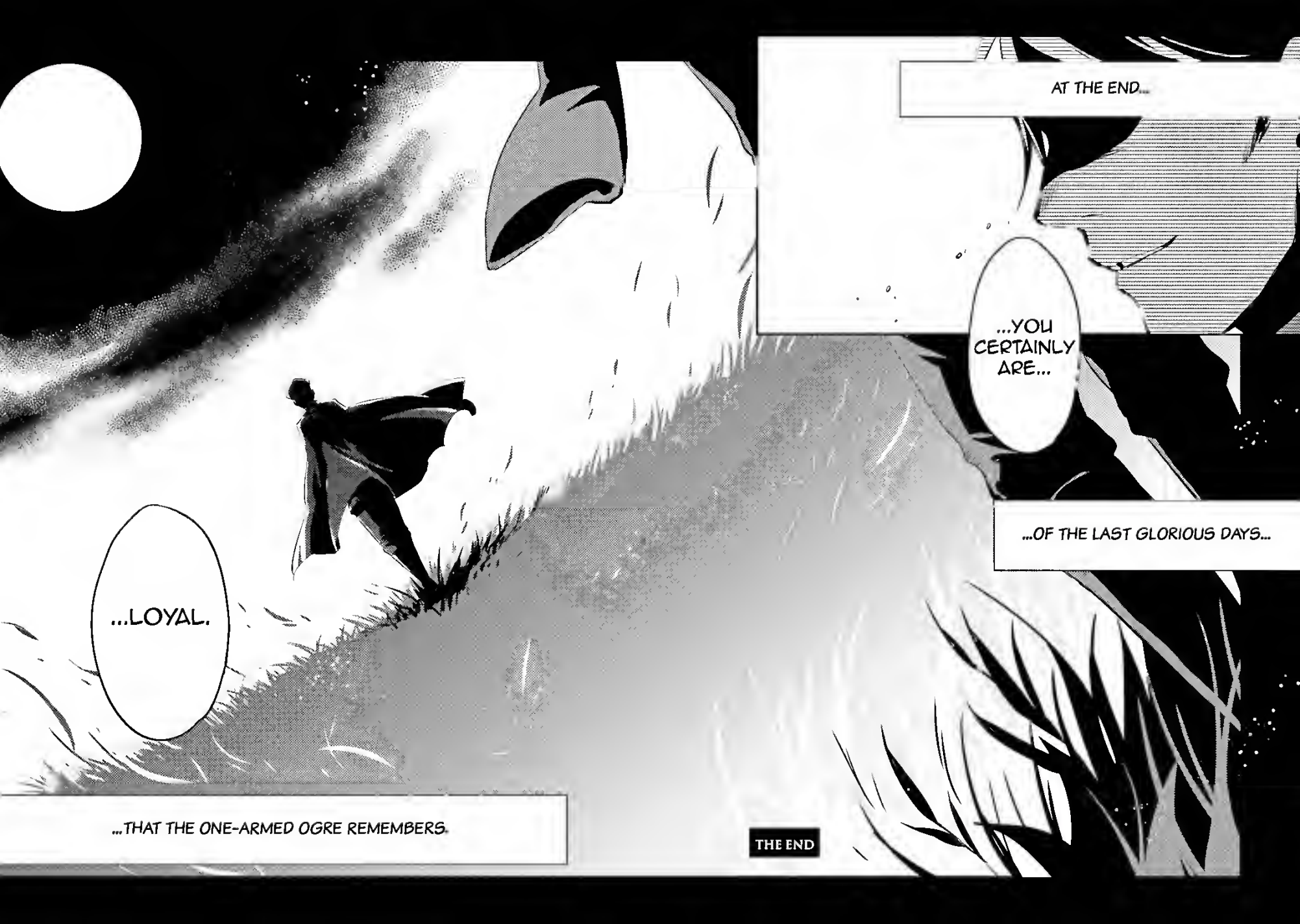
CLATTER
...I-I THINK I'M FULL.
...M-ME TOO...
SHOCK
...GOOD MORN...
CLATTER
SNEAK SNEAK
PEEK
Lalala
No worries!

SILENCE
Uwaghh!
...I'M A DISGRACE.
END OF CHAPTER 15

月下の記憶
IT ALL HAPPENED...
...SO MANY, MANY YEARS AGO.
YOU'RE REALLY GOING?
...
HE'S DEAD, ISN'T HE?
I'M GOING.
I PROMISED, AFTER ALL...

...AT THE OTHER END OF ALL THE DAYS AND ALL THE YEARS THAT MAY SEPARATE US.
...THAT I WOULD BE WAITING...
...I SEE.
IT'S GOING TO BE A PRETTY LONG JOURNEY, HUH?
... YEAH.

THIS IS WHERE WE PART WAYS.
BE WELL.
I SWEAR...
FWSSSHH

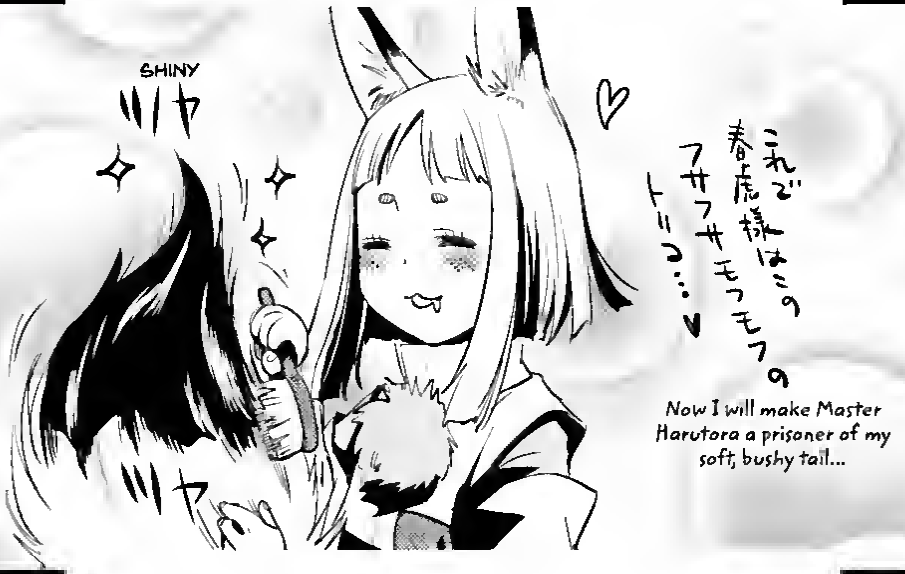

AT THE END...
...YOU CERTAINLY ARE...
...OF THE LAST GLORIOUS DAYS...
...LOYAL.
...THAT THE ONE-ARMED OGRE REMEMBERS.
THE END

AT THE END...
...YOU CERTAINLY ARE...
...OF THE LAST GLORIOUS DAYS...
THE END

...LOYAL.
...THAT THE ONE-ARMED OGRE REMEMBERS.

TOKYO RAVENS

PERSONAL GROOMING



AFTERWORD

HELLO. THIS IS SUZUMI.
TOKYO RAVENS IS ALREADY AT ITS THIRD VOLUME.
IT HAPPENED IN A FLASH...
IT'S BEEN A LITTLE OVER A YEAR SINCE WE GOT SERIALIZED, BUT LATELY I FEEL LIKE I'VE GOT A LOT LEFT TO LEARN.
I CAN'T HELP BUT THINK... THAT I NEED TO WORK EVEN HARDER TO MAKE THIS FASCINATING WORK INTO A FASCINATING COMIC.
I'M GOING TO DO MY BEST TO GROW ALONGSIDE HARUTORA AND HIS FRIENDS!
I WANT TO THANK MR. AZANO, MY SUPERVISOR MR. ASHI, AND EVERYONE FOR READING THIS!!
PLEASE READ THE NEXT VOLUME!!

07/2011, ATSUSHI SUZUMI.

STAFF & HELP
INAGI KAZAMAMORI + KK. KODAMA + SEKINE + HANA HIRATOU + MANNAKA + KM
THANKS FOR THE HELP!!

TOKYO RAVENS
Volume 3

KADOKAWA MANGA

Story by
Kouhei Azano

Art by
Atsushi Suzumi

Character Design by
Sumihei

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